



CITY OF LITHONIA
MINUTES–WORK SESSION VIRTUAL MEETING
Monday, March 21, 2022 @ 5:30 PM

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, Darold Honore, Amelia Inman, and Yolanda Sheppard. Vanneriah Wynn was absent.

II. Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

III. Approval of Agenda

Councilman Honore motioned to approve the agenda as written, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sheppard and approved by a vote of 4-0.

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

No one provided a public comment.

V. Presentation (Limit 3-minutes per person)

a. Hari Karikaran/Lowe Engineers: EOS Final Review

Associate Carl Thomas provided a brief proposal summary in follow up to an original presentation made during June 2021 on the city's maintenance policy with 3 options for which to approve the storm water service, policy identifies what is publicly and privately maintained for a municipality to define more clearly what part of the infrastructure will be maintained by the city. Option 1 boiler plate basic option for the right of way, Option 2 sub stream/upstream-downstream structure, Option 3 most expensive the city maintains all infrastructure in the city. The annual budget is a limited at \$70k. Recommendation of staff is to go with Option 1 to maintain the infrastructure in the right of way and on city property.

Council had no questions or concerns.

b. Curtis Schlobohm: Hannah Solar

Based out of Atlanta for 15 years, help businesses to go solar, did the Mercedes Benz Stadium, CDC, Starbuck's locations, IKEA, and a parking deck in Hawaii just to name a few. City hall building is at 89% of normal bill, public works at 51%. Financing options are Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, low interest rate from the bank, raising bonds. Did not have an opportunity to address the streetlights/lamps with other options to discuss. Solar can save the city 50% of what is normally being paid out at this time.

Councilwoman Howard had no questions. Councilman Honore feels that it's a good idea for the city to look into. Councilwoman Inman asked about the financing piece, likes the presentation, would be a good asset for the city (raise bonds, borrow from the bank, Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, will forward informational link on GEFA to the clerk's office and schedule a future meeting, additionally described what the process looks like). Councilwoman Sheppard hopes the city can look further into solar, also a personal interest for her home.

c. Morris Lucas: Media Technology Career Day

Founder and educational program director, non-profit organization, hosting a Media Technology Career Day in September 12-15 for middle and high school Title 1 districts throughout Metro Atlanta. Seeking sponsorship of 20 students from each city, cost is \$150.00 per student. First of its kind event, hoping for 1,000 students to participate.

Councilwoman Howard asked for clarification on the number of students needed and if the students will be recommended (20 from each city, through teachers and counselors), ages (middle and high school starting at 7th grade). Councilman Honore asked if Morris had previous experience and website/contact information (www.artistspotlight.us, additionally providing 5 references that can be provided electronically and on the chat with contact information). Councilwoman Inman wanted to know if the local high schools have been contacted and how the day will be formatted, would like to partner with the program (not yet, in Gwinnett and Fulton yes, plans to speak with others next week and can provide feedback at that time, examples were shared on what the day would look like speakers/training/interaction, sharing information in the chat for everyone). Councilwoman Sheppard referenced a program called Pathway's that is not offered to every community and really likes the idea of this program.

d. Valeasia Walker: Give Sanctuary Cultural Event

Producing a cultural preservation event, seeking approval to use the park April 30th, inspired by art, music, food giving people an opportunity to have a good time with purpose, a group of preservation vendor experts to educate people, local artists, children's village, schools, inaugural event, not done before, has been on other planning committees in her local neighborhood of Inman Park Reynolds Town, including the community into planning and hosting weekly meetings at Blackdot Bookstore.

Councilman Honore asked about the hours for the event (11 am until 7 pm). No other councilmembers had questions.

e. Robert Soderstrum: Covid Testing

Technical difficulty, presentation not provided.

f. Larry Long: Food Pantry

Representing under the International Order of St. George, a registered charity, would like to work with the City of Lithonia to establish a food pantry for serving veterans and senior citizens. Additionally, would like to work with the Lithonia Farmers Market to provide organic fruits and vegetables to the food pantry and to propose a future community garden, currently working with City of Sandy Springs to establish a food depot.

Councilwoman Howard feels that it is a great idea and to adjoin with the farmers market, looking forward to receiving more information on how to make it happen. Councilman Honore had no questions. Councilwoman Inman replied good to hear your presentation and acknowledged Larry's commitment and participation on the Roundtable Discussion, looking forward to receiving more information to move the program forward. Councilwoman Sheppard had no questions and thanked Mr. Long.

g. Dennis Allen: Park Management

Prior commitment, reschedule for April 4 City Council meeting.

h. Alim Witter: Park Management

Registered bus with sec of state, specialize in event promotion, since 2016 zero complaints long standing event, experience spec, in need of structure and organization, asking it is filled on a perm basis to address res/city, process needs to be streamlined and on-line with deadlines. Noise complaints solution that steps are taken to eliminate, will apply same methods that his event uses with sound checks, residents should be give at least 2-week advance notice (dates/time), other methods that include crowd control/size, awareness a lot of people are aware of the existence of the park to increase promotion of the park.

Councilwoman Howard thanked Alim for a great presentation and asked about calendar scheduling for events outside of personal (there would be set-aside dates for rental and a strive for

balance in the interest of the park, only one date for the annual Colorgasm event at this time). Councilman Honore hears a lot of complaints about the park and not as interested until rules are established on hours, hours of rental. Councilwoman Inman and Councilwoman Sheppard thanked Alim for the presentation and had no questions.

i. Annette Radford: Park Management

Technical difficulty, reschedule for April 4 City Council meeting.

VI. Action Item

a. Lowe Engineers EOS Final Review

Councilwoman Honore motioned to approve Lowe Engineers EOS Storm Water Policy Level 1 for Right of Way and City owned property, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard and approved by a vote of 4-0.

b. Park Management Selection

Councilman Honore motioned to table the Park Management Selection, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sheppard and approved by a vote of 4-0.

Dennis Allen was not available to provide a presentation and Annette Radford was experiencing technical difficulties that prohibited her to provide a presentation.

VII. New Business

a. Bruce Street Day

Councilwoman Sheppard stated this is the 29th annual Bruce Street Day, proposed date is Easter Sunday April 17th from 2:00-7:30 pm. Will include an Easter Egg Hunt for children, bouncy house, DJ, Kona Ice, games, there will be a clean-up crew, parking on Kelly street in an open field, honorable mentions and awards to people in the community, will also provide information about a new community program, want to give it a block community feel catering for elderly to find out what their needs are and provide care packages during the summer, requesting to block off the street on Bruce between Kelly Street and Bruce Court. Councilman Honore stated if there were any additional needs he would like to contribute. Mayor Reynolds asked if anyone talked to residents on the street who would be affected, Councilwoman Sheppard will do so. Councilwoman Howard would like to participate and volunteer for the senior portion. Councilwoman Inman is open to any help needed. Interim Chief of Police Dejarnette would like the police department to participate by competing with a 3 on 3 team. Councilwoman Howard asked if vendors will be in place, Councilwoman Sheppard replied no, due to a park regulation that vendors cannot be on site for profit, everything is free. Councilwoman Howard asked if there would be an informational table for covid and recommended Robert Soderstrum (presenter). Council agreed to move forward. Mayor Reynolds stated the City will provide porta potties for the event as in the past.

Councilwoman Inman motioned to approve Bruce Street Day, Easter Sunday 2022, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore and approved by a vote of 4-0.

b. Public Works Lawn Mower

Public Works Director Monson announced there are 2 new employees, requesting council's approval to purchase a new lawn mower to spread out over the City to accomplish the task more quickly and efficient.

Councilwoman Howard asked for clarity that it would be a riding lawn mower and asked how many lawn mowers the city currently has. PW Director Monson stated yes a riding lawn mower and there are currently 2, the proposed John Deere is \$11,200.00 list price which includes the government discount, retailing at \$14,000.00. Councilman Honore is in agreement that it will help with the maintenance of the City. Councilwoman Inman stated she is fine moving forward with the

purchase as funds are available in the Stormwater budget (as acknowledged by City Administrator Sands), asked about the path trail off of Johnson Street that it needs to be cleaned up, PW Director Monson will monitor this and ensure that it stays clean. Councilwoman Sheppard had no questions and acknowledged a welcome to the new employees.

Councilman Honore motioned to approve the purchase of the John Deere lawn mower for the public works department, \$11,200.00 (prior for discussion), the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sheppard, and approved by a vote of 4-0.

VIII. **Old Business**

a. **Old City Hall Building**

Public Works Director Monson acknowledged that pictures/descriptions of work to be performed for upstairs and downstairs were provided in the agenda packet.

Councilwoman Howard stated that she had to turn her paper sideways to read the messages, and would like to have an estimate provided, PW Director Monson stated that his team can perform some of the work, Councilwoman Howard is not in favor of carpet, PW Director Monson stated that he will clean the floor real good and mop it with floor shine, Councilwoman Howard asked that PW team differentiate and itemize what will come out of pocket for the City and agrees with moving forward to obtain quotes. Councilman Honore no questions. Councilwoman Inman would like a formal scope of work report and RFP's from commercial cleaning companies to address the issue with mold as will help to move the process forward quickly, PW Director Monson confirmed there is no mold upstairs, Councilwoman Inman asked about the old files because old paper draws rats and other creatures, PW Director Monson was unsure about the files and thought to store them at the old boy scout hut. Councilwoman Sheppard had no questions. Mayor Reynolds thanked PW Director Monson for the update. Council is in agreement to move forward. PW Director Monson stated the team would begin the work schedule at least one day/week for now.

b. **Monetizing the City's Digital Sign (Fee Structure)**

Councilwoman Inman is still gathering information and researching with plans to return with a written report providing greater detail for further discussion.

c. **Masonic Lodge Repairs**

PW Director Monson is waiting on the plans from Hari with Lowe Engineers.

IX. **Other Business**

a. **City Administrator Report**

Recap on report sent out earlier to Mayor and Council; will be meeting with Keesha on Thursday regarding the FY2023 budget to schedule dates for prep. Met with Hari on 3/17 to discuss new stormwater fees and will provide that information during the April Work Session, discussed projects for the next 5 years getting quotes from PW Director Monson and Hari. PW Director Monson will receive LAP certification on 3/30. City hall improvement project entrance sign on Main Street when entering the city if too high would obstruct the view when entering onto the street. City Hall lobby improvement signage to include tint \$4,684.00 cost, still browsing for furniture, received an \$89,300.00 quote (cheapest) for replacing the roof because of leakage whenever it rains and as an alternative looking at repairs in place of total roof replacement. Preparations with the attorney for an Airbnb ordinance in effect July 1. Purchasing policy sent out for council to review again before bringing to council again for a vote. Stress management training session scheduled April 19 if interested, LMIG deadline 3/28. Met with Kayla/GMA regarding investment opportunities, met with Truist for quotes on banking for better interest, looking into credit cards in place of a debit card. For HR/Risk Management attended webinar for inclusive leadership and local government, new employees, interviews conducted last week. Met with representative for benefits. Source of Solutions (IT) completed assessment on Friday, pricing for

fiber, phone change outs and circuits needed. Attached resume for Lowe Engineers. Flyers needed by end of month. Code enforcement asked for delinquent tax listings to speak with residents. Met with Charley last week he is willing to handle the flyer through December and assist with farmers market if we can find someone to help him, in dire need of Vistas and asking for referrals.

Councilwoman Howard asked about council raises and if the item should be on the next agenda, City Administrator Sands will need a consensus to advertise and needs a projected amount and indicated the item would be on the next agenda.

b. Police Department Report

Interim Chief of Police Dejarnette provided a statistical update for the past 2 weeks, 5 illegal guns were seized and confiscated, 4 cases regarding narcotic investigations, 1 gun was seized from an individual who was shooting in Councilwoman Sheppard's area at night. Officer Bradford was commended for a situation on Swift Street where he was able to save a mans life by applying pressure on a wound, a presentation is forthcoming soon. Will look at the records at the old city hall building that Councilwoman Inman referenced to see what can be retained or deleted according to records management.

Councilwoman Howard referenced the fine amount for trucks, IC Dejarnette indicated that he had a conversation with the Motor Carrier Compliance Division regarding failure to obey, there is an infraction of \$148.50 across the board for automobiles and trucks, the infraction would have to be consistent for automobile and truck if increased. Councilwoman Howard asked about comparisons with other cities. IC Dejarnette responded the same infraction is used, some fines are the same and some are handled with the courts, will perform additional research, some infractions do come with points on your license which is a deterrent, also if a commercial truck or over a certain gross vehicle rate the infraction be more. Officer Law (full-time) resigned, and this is his last week, filled right away with a new officer, not much of a gap in loss will be on the road shortly, has Reserves coming out over the weekend, 2 officer presence at night in the next few weeks on Wed, Th, Fri, Sat. Councilman Honore remarked awesome job. Councilwoman Sheppard acknowledged a thank you for seeing presence and good job, keep up the good work. Councilwoman Inman acknowledged a thank you and for showing up at the recent quarterly Community Clean-Up Day and going forward.

c. Mayors Report, Councilmember District Update

Mayor Reynolds announced appointments for Historic Preservation Committee: Mrs. Aileen Harper and Mrs. Marie Green, LDDA: Ms. Trina Gibbs, The Lithonia Housing Authority Board: Ms. Sharon Dukes, Mr. Donald Blount (Kaz), Mrs. Marie Green, Mr. Deshon Cooper, and Mr. Darryl Blackwell. Would like to obtain grants and see new development under the housing authority. A calendar for the Amphitheater is forth coming, Mayor publicly thanked Councilwoman Inman for her hard work on the Roundtable and Quarterly Community Clean Up, all Councilmembers, Councilwoman Sheppard for being at the Pastoral event in her absence, and Councilman Honore for attending memorial.

Councilwoman Howard met with Hari/Lowe Engineers on the Annex 2 Masonic Lodge plans and provided him a design description best suited for the building, an open floor plan with the option to place petitions on the main floor for covid related materials, talked to Hari about stop signs in the city mainly the wall at Max Cleland/Swift, Hari will get with CSX to see if the wall can come down a foot or 2. First Advisory Committee meeting occurred this month, talked about interesting ideas, strategic, open to anyone else to attend, next meeting on April 7 at 3:30pm. One good item that came out of the meeting was the topic of Dekalb County's Rodent Department, PW Director Monson will coordinate with Dekalb to find out more about the rodent program.

Councilman Honore had no additional commentary.

Councilwoman Inman announced the next roundtable on April 21 at 5:30 pm, and all volunteers who showed up for the Quarterly Community Clean-Up.

Councilwoman Sheppard encouraged everyone to come out for Bruce Street Day and to enjoy.

VIII. Executive Session (For Personnel)

Councilwoman Howard motioned to enter into Executive Session for personnel at 7:33 pm, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore and approved by a vote of 4-0.

Mayor and all Council with exception of Councilwoman Wynn were in executive session.

Mayor and Council reconvened at 8:12 pm.

Mayor Reynolds stated that concerns were discussed regarding the court and a meeting would be scheduled with the court this/next week to further address.

Councilwoman Inman asked if anyone planned to attend the GMA Convention on 6/24-28 in Savannah and if anyone registered. Everyone is interested however no one has signed up, Councilwoman Howard is waiting on her transcript to prevent duplication of classes.

IX. Adjournment

Councilwoman Inman motioned to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sheppard; the motion was approved by a vote of 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.