

MINUTES
CITY OF MCDONOUGH
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL – 136 KEYS FERRY STREET
SEPTEMBER 18, 2017
6:00 PM

The Regular Meeting of the City of McDonough City Council was held on Monday, September 18, 2017, at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Copeland called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The City Clerk, Ms. Janis Price called roll for the meeting, as follows:

Mayor Billy Copeland	Present
Mayor Pro Tem Roger Pruitt	Present
Councilmember Craig Elrod	Absent
Councilmember Benjamin Pruett	Present
Councilmember Rufus Stewart	Present
Councilmember Kamali Varner	Present
Councilmember Sandra Vincent	Present

Others in attendance for the meeting were: City Administrator, Mr. Keith Dickerson; City Attorney, Ms. Leigh Hancher; City Clerk, Ms. Janis Price; Community Development Director, Mr. Rodney Heard; Finance Director, Mr. Mike Clark; Human Resources Director, Ms. Carla Tuck; Deputy Fire Chief, Mr. Dave Williams; and Technology Services Director, Mr. Steve Sikes.

Mayor Copeland called for a motion to approve the Agenda. Councilmember Stewart motioned and Councilmember Pruett seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Copeland, Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt, Councilmember Pruett, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember Varner and Councilmember Vincent. Councilmember Elrod was not present at the meeting.

Councilmember Pruett led the Pledge to the Flag; and Councilmember Vincent gave the invocation.

6. Approval of the Consent Agenda
 - A. Adoption of a resolution establishing the City of McDonough “Adopt-a-Spot” litter reduction program, and authorization for the Mayor to sign related documents.
 - B. Approval of a revised Salary Schedule effective October 6, 2017.
 - C. Approval of the September 7, 2017, Workshop minutes.

Mayor Copeland called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Stewart motioned and Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those

voting in favor were Mayor Copeland, Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt, Councilmember Pruett, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember Varner and Councilmember Vincent. Councilmember Elrod was not present at the meeting.

Mayor Copeland discussed the Proclamation for Rodney Bowler Day, on September 15, 2017, in which the City honored Mr. Bowler for his work as the Henry County Schools Superintendent from 2014 to 2017. Mayor Copeland also presented the Proclamation for National Payroll Week and read it into the record. Ms. Tracy Ravencraft was in attendance for the meeting to accept a copy of the Proclamation.

Additionally, Mayor Copeland presented the Proclamation for the Walk to End Alzheimer's and read it into the record. After presenting the Proclamation, Mayor Copeland invited Councilmember Vincent and Ms. Sylvia Dennis to offer remarks about the upcoming 2017 Walk to End Alzheimer's.

- Councilmember Vincent offered a tribute to Sylvia and Scottie Dennis for all of their efforts and for starting a local support group in Henry County
- So far \$20,000 has been raised in support of the Walk to End Alzheimer's
- We started as a support group in Peachtree City and we now have our own mini-walk
- Alzheimer's is now being diagnosed in much younger age groups therefore awareness and efforts to treat the disease are very important
- Ms. Dennis offered her heartfelt appreciation for all of the support for the Walk to End Alzheimer's
- She personally recognized the members of her team and thanked the City of McDonough and several other groups for their support in making the event a success

Mayor Copeland called for a motion to make the Proclamations for Rodney Bowler Day, National Payroll Week and the Walk to End Alzheimer's an official part of the minutes of the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt motioned and Councilmember Stewart seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Copeland, Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt, Councilmember Pruett, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember Varner and Councilmember Vincent. Councilmember Elrod was not present at the meeting.

City Administrator, Mr. Keith Dickerson discussed of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC):

- This is the kick-off public hearing for Comprehensive Plan Update, entitled "Imagine Henry 2040"
- Mr. Dickerson reviewed a Power Point presentation from ARC on how to best gather input from citizens
- We will hold several public meetings and open houses
- ARC will do research and analysis and they will condense all of the findings
- Draft report expected May of 2018

Mayor Copeland opened the floor for Council comments and questions prior to holding the Public Hearing; and discussion ensued. Councilmember Vincent expressed the

importance of gathering input from all citizens of the City of McDonough and she requested that efforts be extended to reach out to all of the City's residents. Councilmember Varner asked if the City would partner with the McDonough Youth Advisory Council to gather feedback from millennials, and Mr. Dickerson agreed.

Mayor Copeland opened the Public Hearing. No one spoke in favor; and no one spoke in opposition. Mayor Copeland closed the Public Hearing.

Mayor Copeland called for a motion to move forward with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt motioned and Councilmember Vincent seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Copeland, Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt, Councilmember Pruett, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember Varner and Councilmember Vincent. Councilmember Elrod was not present at the meeting.

Mr. Dickerson reviewed the Jonesboro Road Park concept design.

- Bron Cleveland provided original concept plan for the park
- Adjustments were made to the parking lot and entrance area
- Plan is mostly greenspace with walking trails, three playground areas and a proposed sitting area
- There is a possibility to use wetlands at Stormwater education area
- Engineering and Stormwater services will be provided by the County per the agreement

Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt shared his concerns that if the plan is approved, future Councils will be obligated to move forward without the necessary funds. He suggested that the Council only approve what can be paid for with the allocated SPLOST funds. Mr. Dickerson responded that Impact Fees can go to playgrounds, benches and picnic tables.

Councilmembers Stewart, Varner and Pruett each conveyed the need to move forward with the project. Councilmember Pruett shared concerns about losing bonded money if the project continues to be delayed; however, he believed the Council should only approve the aspects of the project that can be covered with the funds that are currently available; and further discussion ensued.

Mr. Dickerson said that he believed that part of the parking and walking trail could be done with the money that is available, with the County having agreed to cover the costs of Engineering and Stormwater services.

Councilmember Vincent asked if there has been a scope of work with exact costs for the other city parks; and she questioned why this is a topic of conversation only for projects within District 2. She stated that no park has had all of the necessary funding at the outset of phase one and they have always been phased-in over time. After further discussion, she called for the question.

Mayor Copeland stated that this was a partnership between the City and the County that went awry and involved a lawsuit. He acknowledged that the project has been an ongoing discussion for 12 years, and said that the County spent their portion of the dedicated funds on other projects while waiting on the City to move forward.

Councilmember Vincent offered clarification that there was an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the County, which set out a joint purchase between the City and the County to develop a soccer complex. After the property purchase and approval of the agreement, the County determined that the land was no suitable for a soccer complex and they moved the SPLOST dollars to the Mount Carmel Soccer Complex. She stated that the land is ready to develop and the City can now move forward with the blessing of the County.

Mayor Copeland stated that the agreement was for the County to improve that property, not the City. He then called for a motion. Councilmember Vincent motioned for approval of the concept plan as presented by the City Administrator, and for the commencement of appropriate work; and Councilmember Varner seconded.

Prior to the vote Councilmember Vincent clarified that her motion is in harmony with what is stated on the meeting agenda. She then asked for further clarification from the City Attorney as to whether or not the amount of \$535,000 in allocated funds should be added to the motion. Ms. Hancher responded that since the allocation of the SPLOST funds had been previously set out that there was no need to include it within the motion.

The City Clerk, Ms. Janis Price repeated the motion for approval of a concept plan as presented by the City Administrator, and for the commencement of the appropriate work. The vote was four in favor and two opposed. Those voting in favor were Mayor Copeland, Councilmember Stewart, Councilmember Varner and Councilmember Vincent. Those voting in opposition were Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt and Councilmember Pruett. Councilmember Elrod was not present for the meeting. The motion passed.

Finance Director, Mr. Mike Clark presented the financial update of revenues and expenditures for the General Fund, SPLOST Projects and Hotel/Motel Fund for the one month, ended July 31, 2017:

- Revenues for the General Fund totaled \$684,689 and total expenditures were \$1,047,449.
- Excess expenditures over revenues total \$362,760.
- Property taxes received in July were prior taxes with total revenue of \$3,000.
- Revenues for SPLOST III totaled \$56 and no expenditures reported
- Expenditures for SPLOST IV totaled \$22,699 and no revenues reported
- Revenues for the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund totaled \$112,400 and total expenditures of \$112,400.

Unscheduled Public Comments

Mr. Wayne Smith came before Mayor and Council to discuss the property located at 32 Jonesboro Street, formerly known as the Truman House.

- Mr. Smith is a 30-year resident and served as the first County Engineer
- Mr. Smith served as a councilmember for the City when the property was purchased in 2010.
- Property was purchased to create additional parking to downtown
- Mr. Smith is disturbed that the property has been provided for use by a private non-profit group in lieu of parking
- Previous concept plans predicted 27 code-compliant parking spaces could be added within the property
- Mr. Smith said he feels sure that the Veterans Group is doing some good; however, he does not believe it is the City's place to provide special privilege and support for any one private non-profit
- Veterans Group was already providing the services within the City without the use of this property
- The needs of business people for parking were set aside for one group
- Comments should not be misconstrued to insinuate that Mr. Smith does not support Veterans; his father and father-in-law both served in the Armed Forces
- This use of the property is a mistake and a misuse of the City's money in Mr. Smith's opinion
- He feels that this is a betrayal of the public trust, and he would have never voted to purchase the property for this use

Mayor Copeland thanked Mr. Smith for his comments relative to the use of the Truman House property and stated that yes there had been a plan for parking discussed; however, he reviewed the minutes and there was never a vote taken to build a parking lot at this property site. Mayor Copeland also stated that not only were the Veterans using this building but that there would be a community room available to use.

At the conclusion of the public comments, Mayor Copeland recognized two scouts from Troop 66, Jayden Kinard and Andrew Palmertree, who were present at the meeting in an effort to earn their Communication badges.

No Executive Session was held.

City Administrator, Mr. Keith Dickerson thanked all of the staff and councilmembers who came in to offer assistance to those in need during the recent storm.

City Clerk, Ms. Janis Price told Mayor and Council that the promotional items for the City which were left at their chairs were provided by Main Street; however, she noted that there was a spelling error which was made by the marketing company who produced the items. (Reprinting of the items correctly will be at the marketing company's expense).

Councilmember Vincent echoed the sentiments of the City Administrator concerning the work and dedication of the City staff during the recent storm. She also shared concerns regarding communication that she received from some of the residents at Heritage of McDonough regarding safety issues that they experienced as a result of the loss of

electricity during the storm, which placed those residents in harm's way. She voiced concerns about the management of the property and she said that she is working with others to address those issues. She also reminded everyone that on Saturday, September 23, at 9:00 a.m., the "As-One Prayer Walk" will be held at the Henry County High School; and she invited everyone to come and participate in the faith-based initiative.

Additionally, Councilmember Vincent voiced that she continues to be disturbed that there seems to be a disparity in relation to how District 2 is treated from a policy standpoint. She said that by not utilizing the Wesley Lakes School as a voting precinct for the upcoming elections, it will cause voter confusion; and that the refusal of Mayor and Council to invest under \$3,000 to provide a voting location within District 2, has all of the markings of voter suppression. She went on record to express her support of voters who live in District 2, and share her beliefs that those residents were treated unfairly by not having a voting precinct within that district.

Councilmember Pruett also shared his appreciation for the City staff and leaders for their dedication and efforts to provide citizens with needed assistance during the storm.

Councilmember Stewart shared his beliefs that God is doing something in this world and speaking to us; but are we really listening? Mr. Stewart said that God has a purpose for the things that are happening in this world. He shared his personal appreciation for the efforts of staff members and City leaders who showed love and support to the citizens and to one another during the storm.

Councilmember Varner also expressed her gratitude for the staff members who saw the citizens through Hurricane Irma, and who also made sure that the City returned to functioning normally as quickly as possible. She invited everyone in attendance to the groundbreaking and Town Hall Meeting, which will take place at 6:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., on Tuesday, September 19. She took the opportunity to congratulate Mr. Arman Bryan, who is a member of the McDonough Youth Advisory Council, as he will be serving on the 2017-2018 Student Advisory Council for the Board of Education along with two other students. In closing, Councilmember Vincent noted that she will be unable to attend the Thursday, October 5, 2017, Workshop Meeting because she will be out of town.

Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt also shared his appreciation for the City staff and its leaders for the true dedication they showed to the citizens of McDonough during the hurricane. He then asked the City Attorney if the City of McDonough has an ordinance for exotic pets. Ms. Hancher responded that the City has an Animal Control ordinance; however, she was not

certain on what specific animals are included. She said that she would be happy to look into it and make any changes that the Council deems necessary. In closing, Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt offered his appreciation for the City offering 18 days of early voting for the upcoming elections on November 7, 2018.

Councilmember Varner also requested to look over the Animal Control ordinance, so that she could provide input. Mr. Dickerson said that copies would be provided so that each council member could look over the ordinance. Ms. Hancher clarified that the City's current ordinance is ultimately the Animal Control ordinance for Henry County, under the current Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) Agreement.

Mayor Copeland thanked everyone in attendance for the meeting. He also shared his agreement with Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt's comments regarding the 18 early voting days, and he noted that he did not support the addition of any more early-voting dates/places.

Mayor Copeland called for a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Pruitt motioned and Councilmember Stewart seconded. All stood in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Janis E. Price
City Clerk

OPEN MEETINGS COMPLIANCE NOTICE: This is a regularly scheduled meeting of Mayor and Council of the City of McDonough duly noticed pursuant to the requirements of the Georgia Open Meetings Law (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1, et seq). Notice of the meeting was published in the Henry Herald on December 21, 2016; and a copy of the meeting schedule was posted at City Hall and on the City's website, as required by law.