

**City Council of Peachtree City
Minutes of Special Called Meeting
August 13, 2007
6:30 p.m.**

The City Council of Peachtree City met in a special called meeting on Monday, August 13, 2007, in the Floy Farr Room at the City Library. Mayor Logsdon called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Other Council Members present were: Steve Boone, Stuart Kourajian, and Cyndi Plunkett.

The purpose of the special called meeting was to interview applicants to fill the vacancy for City Council Post 1 through December 31, 2007, and to appoint someone to fill the vacancy.

Mayor Logsdon announced that Linda Wojcik, one of the 10 applicants, had been selected as the alternate to the Planning Commission and had withdrawn her application for the Council position. There were now nine applicants.

City Manager Bernard McMullen briefly went over the rules for the process, which were ordained by the Code of Ordinances, Section 2-22. The first round of the process would begin with a five-minute presentation by each applicant. Each applicant folded a slip of paper with their name on it and put it in a basket, then City Attorney Ted Meeker drew the names. The presentations were given in the order the names were drawn. Following the presentations, each Council Member would ask each applicant up to two questions. After the questions, Council would rate the top four applicants, with four being the highest rating. McMullen continued that he and Meeker would tabulate the ratings, and the four applicants with the highest ratings would proceed to the second round of questions. After the additional questions, Council would rank the four applicants, and the applicant with the highest rating would be recommended for the selection.

Kourajian said it would be best to have the other applicants leave the room while Council was asking questions of an applicant. He felt that hearing the others' answers might be an unfair advantage. Council agreed.

Logsdon asked if the newly appointed Council Member would be sworn in that night. McMullen recommended that the new Council Member be sworn in at the August 16 meeting in the event that person had someone special they wanted to give them the oath of office.

The applicants gave their presentations in the following order – Chris Larson, Donnie Haddix, Ray (Doug) Sturbaum, Timothy Hoyle, Mike Harman, Michael Moore, Thomas O'Toole, Richard (Dar) Thompson, and William Holland. Following the presentations, all but Larson left the room. Each Council Member was allowed to ask each applicant two questions.

Questions to Larson included what he thought were best success story and biggest mistake in the City, what his vision for the future was, if his schedule would allow

adequate time for his duties, his ideas to market and promote the City, and whether the budget met the needs and goals of the residents. Larson said the quality of life drew people to the City. The path system was also a success, but was becoming a liability. There had been unrestrained growth. More industry was needed long term to help pay for services. The City should look at redevelopment in some areas. Larson said the City should enhance what it was currently doing as far as marketing and promotion. The website had improved, but should be more interactive. Public Safety salaries should be higher and should attract the best candidates. More industry should be brought in to pay the increase cost of services. The older industrial areas should be redeveloped. The City should give some tax breaks, but industries were pretty much revenue neutral when they came here.

Questions asked to Haddix included his ideas to get more citizens involved, his goals for the City, his perception of the budget, and what he thought had been a mistake. Haddix said things needed to be more open, and a forum for public discussion should be available on the website. A forum was a way for citizens to give input and Council to address issues without personalizing them. There should be contact between the City and the neighboring entities. There should be a City presence at the Board of Education meetings and Fayette and Coweta County Commission meetings. There should be more coordination on joint planning issues. Haddix said that he was passionate about preserving the City's image and the vision of 20 years ago, but recognized there had to be growth and change. Haddix said the perception that projects were done deals before they were debated was something that needed to be worked on. The forum could be used to dispel those notions. The City needed businesses that attracted people to work and live in the City.

Questions to Sturbaum included how he saw himself as a decision maker, what his favorite thing was about the City, what his long-term vision was, what his interest was in Falcon Field, and how the City compared to Gwinnett County. Sturbaum said that sometimes the best decision was not the most popular decision. He would not prejudge a decision based on what he felt, but would look at the facts. Sturbaum's favorite thing about the City was the golf carts. He continued that, when in a golf cart, everybody was friendly. Sturbaum said that, during the next 30 years, the City should continue to enhance growth through management. There should be more employee-friendly businesses, not more retail, to help maintain the way of life and continue to protect the children. Sturbaum said he would like to see the airport become a semi-relief valve for Hartsfield, and a place where smaller airlines could be based. In comparison with Gwinnett County it cost a bit more to live in the City, but overall it was a normal adjustment.

Hoyle's presentation focused on Public Safety, primarily the Police Department. The Council Members' questions focused on those comments, including his suggestion that the standards for new police officers be lowered. Hoyle said many entities accepted applications from people with DUIs or misdemeanor drug possession charges. Those people should be looked at more closely, especially those whose cases had been

dismissed or were found not guilty. He believed the residents would be willing to pay higher taxes for the specific purpose of improving safety on the paths. Hoyle said the standards for new officers should be lowered in order to fill the vacant positions. He was not suggesting the City hire just anybody, but there were a lot of good candidates overlooked because they made mistakes early in life. Hoyle said the City had done a great job of controlling growth, and the SR 74 widening would help with traffic. There needed to be more east-west connections, but Coweta County needed to have alternate routes to I-85 first.

Questions to Harman [who was serving as chairman of the Water & Sewerage Authority (WASA)] covered traffic, extending sewer outside of the City limits, and the City's future. Harman said the majority of the traffic issues were people coming and going to Coweta County, Fayetteville, or the interstate. The SR 54/SR 74 intersection needed to be fixed and was as much of a burden for Coweta as it was for the City. Widening SR 74 beyond Cooper Lighting could also be an issue. He noted that there were many large properties south of the county line waiting to be developed, so there would be more stop lights. They needed to go to the table early and limit the access points on SR 74. Harman said Tyrone had approached WASA about extending sewer. WASA felt it was best for Council to make that decision. Currently, WASA ran at a yearly deficit of \$300,000, but had enough reserves so rates had not increased. Selling the sewer capacity to Tyrone would help in the short term, but he did not know if it would be the best solution long term. In the future, Harman said that, from a WASA reference, the City should annex those few parcels left on the south side as a block, so it would be less costly for WASA to manage the infrastructure. The cost to deal with the parcels one at a time was \$250,000.

The Council asked Moore questions regarding redevelopment, balancing recreation needs and public safety needs, and the City's Development Authority (Moore was serving on the Authority). Moore said he wished there was an answer on redevelopment. Grant money was available for companies to redevelop, which would give the business the opportunity to redevelop as opposed to the government getting involved. People would expect the same services for the same amount of taxes, so the services must be funded through more industry. Moore said the reason many residents were in the City was because of the services available for their children. The City had to have police to keep people safe. If the City was at buildout, taxes had to increase unless something else happened. Moore said both the Planning Commission and the Development Authority did a lot of the same things. If they did not work together, then they were duplicating efforts. Moore said that he was concerned the City was dipping into the cash reserve, but he did not see a lot of fat in the budget.

Questions to O'Toole concerned using technology to improve communication with citizens, eliminating graffiti and trash, and the budget. O'Toole said the Police Department's I-Net program was an excellent opportunity to get people involved. Peachtree City 101 was also an excellent start and should be expanded and look at neighborhood representation. To improve dialogue with the citizens, O'Toole suggested

sending an official representative to homeowners' association meetings. O'Toole said the sense of community in the City was unique and the recreational opportunities were well-designed to keep people in their community. There should be community centers in the empty shops in the retail villages with recreational activities. O'Toole said the Adopt-a-Path program was underutilized, and citizen patrols could help cut down on trash and crime. The budget was on the right track, but money was not the only answer to some issues.

Thompson was asked about creating a positive environment for business, his suggestion to implement a real estate transaction fee, community involvement, and traffic. Thompson said there would always be negative comments. His philosophy was that you could always do better. The real estate transaction fee could be loaded into mortgages for people moving into the community. The fee could be used for paths and greenspace. Current residents would pay the fee on the difference in the value of the properties if they moved within the City limits. Thompson said the fee could provide an additional \$400,000 in revenue annually. He also suggested using the City's recreation facilities to bring in more tournaments, which benefited the City's businesses and increased the sales tax revenue. There was a trickle-down effect. Businesses were affected when there were too many of the same services. Businesses that did well gave back to the community. Thompson supported the West Village and said it was the final piece of the puzzle.

Holland was asked how he would keep the City's character in the future and what could be done to make the City more environmentally-friendly. Holland said this was a great family city. The industrial growth would help. He and his wife picked up trash, and others should be encouraged to do so. He noted that the library was a prime candidate for solar energy, but it had not been done. Energy-efficient design should be part of a sustainable building. Holland said the City had to look at the energy savings as a long-term payback. He said there had to be an interest in doing the little things, too. His vision for the future included getting involved in the lives of young people, so the future could benefit from what people had learned. He noted that a lot of the trash came from young people who were making a statement.

Logsdon thanked the applicants for their interest and willingness to serve. He encouraged those applicants not selected to stay involved. He explained that the Council Members would rate their top four choices with the top choice receiving a four. The City Attorney and City Manager would tabulate the scores, and the four finalists would be the four applicants with the most points. Meeker announced that, in alphabetical order, the four finalists were Harman, Larson, O'Toole, and Thompson.

After a short break, the Council Members asked the four finalists additional questions. Following the questions, Logsdon asked each applicant to give a brief summation, up to three minutes.

O'Toole said he had made unpopular votes in the past while serving on boards in other areas. He suggested that the City look at where it wanted to be and design residential

redevelopment credits to encourage redevelopment in those areas. Getting information out was important, and he suggested establishing an advisory council with representatives from each village.

Harman said Council needed to make tough decisions. His experience on WASA had prepared him for the difficult tasks coming up. He wanted to serve the community on a larger scale.

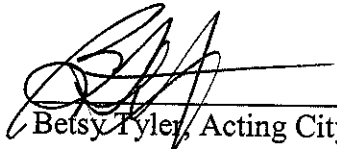
Thompson noted that traffic issues came up a lot. He said that the City should look at roundabouts at certain intersections and look at what other cities with the same problems had done. It was most important to find a way to create more revenue sources in order to keep from increasing taxes.

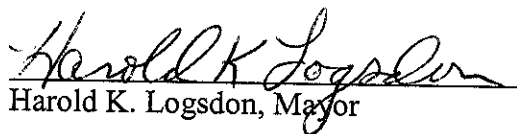
Larson said he was an average person in an above-average community. Redevelopment was important, but the level of community had to be maintained. There needed to be more locally-owned businesses because they cared more about what they did. Public safety needed quality people, who lived in the City. There were no easy answers on the traffic issues.

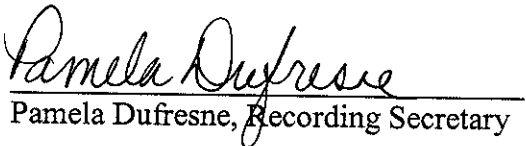
Council again rated the four finalists, with the City Manager and City Attorney tabulating the score. The final scores were Harman, 13; Thompson, 11; Larson, 8; and O'Toole, 8.

Kourajian moved to appoint Mike Harman to fill the vacancy in Council Post 1. Boone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss, Plunkett moved to adjourn the meeting. Logsdon seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:32 p.m.


Betsy Tyler, Acting City Clerk


Harold K. Logsdon, Mayor


Pamela Dufresne, Recording Secretary