City Council of Peachtree City
Workshop Minutes
June 15, 2015

The Peachtree City Mayor and Council met in a workshop session on Monday, June 15, 2015, to discuss the proposed FY 2016 budget. Mayor Fleisch opened the workshop at 6:30 p.m. Others attending: Terry Ernst, Eric Imker, Mike King, and Kim Learnard.

Interim City Manager Jon Rorie began with a review of the City's mission statement:

> *The Mayor, Council Members and Employees of the City of Peachtree City recognize that our primary responsibility is to provide **high quality services** to our residents.*
> *We are therefore committed to:*
> - *Ensuring residents a safe and healthy environment in which to live, work and enjoy leisure time*
> - *Providing consistency in the delivery of municipal services in a fiscally responsible manner*
> - *Responding in a courteous, timely, and effective manner to the expressed needs, concerns, and expectations of our residents*
> - *Promoting a sense of community through family oriented activities and citizen involvement.*

Rorie emphasized the phrase "high quality services" in the initial paragraph, noting that had different meanings to different people, but it always ended up as level of service impacts and demands.

Rorie said the purpose of the workshop was to provide the thought process of connecting history to the future. The budget document was a complex creation aimed at defining service levels. The economic downturn of 2008 had caused the City to tighten its belt, freezing salaries, delaying maintenance, and putting off capital expenditures. The workshop that night was to present a budget, with the expenses balanced against the revenues, and allow Council to define what services would be provided.

The budget options developed by staff ranged from $33.2 to $34.4 million, with millage rate increase options of 0 to 0.65 and various levels of service and initiatives representing an investment in Peachtree City's brand and its infrastructure.

Rorie said the City had held extensive planning meetings, called ONE PTC, with residents two years ago. The participants had highlighted things they liked about the City (with the highest rated components including the path system, golf carts, and safety), as well as things that could be improved.

Staff also had a prioritized listing from the January 2015 Retreat of City Council goals. The highest priorities related to the path system, including increasing golf cart registration fees to $15 every three years; prioritizing the golf cart master plan to include Cedarcroft, Gittings, and Camden apartments; prioritizing and expanding golf cart resurfacing projects; and connecting annexed and adjacent areas (such as Peachtree East Shopping Center) to the path system.

The next priority (#5) related to traffic improvements, and included revisiting the connector from the Line Creek development to MacDuff Crossing and connecting to the Line Creek Nature

Area entrance. A turn lane from Planterra Way onto SR 54 was also a component of that priority.

Rorie then reviewed the initiatives incorporated in the proposed budget.

Initiative: Path Paving

Rorie said the number one priority and amenity for Peachtree City was the path system, which encompassed 97 miles. Thirteen percent, or 12 miles, had a rating below 80. The City's Paths Crew had seven employees, representing $492,000 in salary and benefits, and could resurface a path for roughly $175,000 per mile. Outsourcing the path paving would cost between $375,000 and $400,000 per mile. Labor and resources for path resurfacing equaled roughly $1 million for 2015 (.539 mils), and staff had a goal of six miles programmed for 2015. In addition to the paths rated below 80, there were individual pockets of repairs needed for roots incursion on paths that were in good shape otherwise.

Rorie noted at the last Council meeting, there had been a brief discussion about what functions the City did well, versus what contractors did well. Rorie said street paving and patching was something that the contractor did well. The City Streets Crew also consisted of seven employees dedicated to pavement management, patching, pothole repairs, crack sealing, curb repairs and replacements, and stormwater projects. However, the crew was not well equipped for larger patching projects. On the other hand, the City's contractor was performing resurfacing and restriping, and this summer would also perform large patching projects. This gave the City an opportunity to refocus the efforts of the existing Streets Crew on path resurfacing. There were funds included the budget, but not specifically identified, that would allow this. The change would eliminate one supervisor position (currently vacant), and add a heavy truck driver and maintenance technician. This would allow the City to increase from six to nine miles of path paving in 2016 (the number did not double because the streets crew would still perform street curb and gutter replacement, crack sealing, and stormwater functions). The major patching would then be outsourced with the other street paving projects.

Equipment would also be needed for this change, including a dump truck and bobcat. The net impact on the budget would be a $25,000 increase in salary and benefits (replacing one position with two), and a $5,000 increase in debt service for the equipment.

Initiative: New Path Construction

The path system master plan was last updated in October 2010, identifying 59 new paths (25 miles), five new bridges/tunnels, and 20 replacement tunnels for a total of $15.5 million. Paths were prioritized using an evaluation matrix that included connectivity, design and construction costs, safety, and funding. Additional expansion proposals discussed since that time included the Cedarcroft/MacDuff Parkway path, a Crosstown at-grade crossing (ranked 50th of 59 in 2010), a path on Huddleston Road (ranked 22nd), and a path to Carriage Lane/Peachtree East Shopping Center.

Staff had approached two homeowners about a path easement to make the most economical connection for Cedarcroft, but they had refused to provide easements. However, working with the developer for the new construction in Wilksmoor had resulted in some grade crossings at intersections that would be constructed as tabletops for traffic control, addressing the connectivity. This left $150,000 available for other path projects.

The Carriage Lane path connection was estimated to cost $104,000 to construct, but the City did not have an easement or right of way across the cemetery property, and the costs for the necessary land were unknown. Additionally, the City was working with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) on grade crossings at SR 54 to Peachtree East, which might reduce the need for the path connection.

On Crosstown, a relatively small path connecting from the south side to the north side at McDonald's was expected to cost $377,000 due to the topography and the need to site the grade crossing well east of the intersection with SR 74 due to sight visibility.

Finally, there was development activity planned for SR 74 South (MOBA) that would eventually provide a connection to the existing tunnel under 74 at the Peachtree City Athletic Center (PAC). However, the City would need to provide a connection from the Gardener Park area to this new path at a cost ranging from $125,000 to $250,000, depending on soil conditions. There might also be an opportunity for another bridge connection (cost undetermined) to the path between the Wilshire and Rubicon neighborhoods, enhancing connectivity to the tunnel under SR 74.

Initiative: Street Repaving

Rorie reviewed the City's street inventory, noting there were approximately 179 miles of roads. Currently, 38% (68 miles) fell below a rating of 80. This totaled $21,847 million in repaving costs (estimated at Full Depth Reclamation [FDR] due to the previous economization at repaving). At five miles per year, it would take 35 years to complete all the paving projects. The 2015 budget allocated $770,000 for the street resurfacing program. An additional $618,999 had been appropriated from Cash Reserves to complete the paving projects. However, those figures did not give the full picture.

The 2014 budget designated $1 million for the 18 roads (roughly eight miles) scheduled for repaving. The bid had come in for $2.44 million. No roads were repaved (partially due to delaying Crosstown until the Kroger construction was completed), and the $1 million reverted to Fund Balance at the end of FY 2014.

The 2015 budget needed to address 31 additional roads, making the total of roads needing repaving 49 (21 miles). The bid for Crosstown, a portion of Peachtree Parkway South, and two others came in at $1.7 million, requiring a $618,000 use of cash reserves. The remaining roads from the 2014 and 2015 lists would carry over to 2016. At $315,000 per mile in paving costs, the City could achieve the following based on what Council designated for street paving in FY 2016:

$1.6 million = 5 miles of repaving
$2.1 million = 6.6 miles
$2.5 million = 7.9 miles

For 2016, the City had 45 roads (19.5 miles) totaling nearly $6 million to repave or FDR.

Initiative: Traffic improvements

Rorie said the City had commissioned a study for improvements to the traffic flow on SR 54 West. There were several short-term options to help, but none had been budgeted for design or construction.

Two of the projects that would have the most impact were improvements to the Planterra intersection, which currently caused delays on SR 54 because it had separate green lights for the north- and southbound traffic. Modifying the median nose on the east side of the intersection and construction of a northbound left turn lane would allow for the removal of the split phase operation.

The Green T Signalized intersection at the Overlook would be constructed by the developer later this year, possibly between August and February. This was a good time to look at doing the Planterra intersection as well (during the existing disruption), according to Rorie.

Initiative: New Police Detective

Interim Police Chief Stan Pye reported that the number of fraud cases investigated by the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) had been steadily increasing over the years, from 80 in 2010 to an estimated 412 this year. The division saw spikes in March and April (around tax filing time) and again around the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, due to the increased level of shopping. Other crimes investigated, which had held fairly steady in the 700s each year, had were expected to top out at over 1230 for 2015, and would continue to increase.

Meanwhile, the division's case closure rate, which had improved dramatically in 2010 (from 10%, which was about average) to 34% in 2010 and 43% in 2011, was now on a downward trend (32% to date for 2015).

Pye said he had reviewed the surrounding agencies for their numbers of investigators and fraud cases. Peachtree City exceeded Tyrone and Senoia in total number of investigators, but had the same number (one) of dedicated fraud investigators. All other agencies, including Fayetteville, Newnan, Griffin, and Fayette, Coweta, and Spalding Counties, had higher levels.

To catch up and maintain the department's level of service, an additional detective was needed. The costs would be $71,211 in salary and benefits; $2,500 in uniforms; $25,000 for a vehicle and accessories; $5,000 for weapons, radio, etc.; and $2,100 for a laptop.

Fiscal Outlook

Financial Services Director Paul Salvatore gave an overview of the FY 2014 audit:

• Actual G/F Revenues:	$29,850,590
• Actual G/F Expenditures:	28,583,421
• Surplus	$ 1,267,169
• Projected Deficit:	($ 1,281,085)
• Positive Variance:	$ 2,548,254
• Ending Fund Balance*:	$12,701,041
• Ending Fund Balance Percent:	45%

** Net of reserves for Inventories and Prepaid Expenses*

Salvatore continued that the original FY 2015 Budget called for use of $412,060 in cash reserves. That had been amended to increase the use of reserves to over $2.1 million ($1.7 million increase). There were several factors that accounted for the difference. Salvatore reviewed the standing of cash reserves:

Surplus in excess of Projection:	$2,548,254
Appropriated in FY 2015 Budget process:	412,060
Additional FY15 appropriations of cash reserves:	
Carryover of FY 2014 PO's:	$191,090
Paving- carry-over of unspent funds	618,000
Revised Pay Plan	604,328
Lake Peachtree Expenses	208,295
Station 84 Renovation & Sewer	74,903
New Human Resources Position (partial yr.)	28,128
	$1,724,744
Remaining Surplus in Excess of Projection:	$411,450

Salvatore noted that the projections for 2015 actual expenses were $700,000 savings over original budget ($32.5 million budgeted, $31.8 million projected actual, or 2%), with $595, 392 in projected revenue surplus ($30.4 million budgeted, $31.0 million projected actual, or 2%). Those numbers would help the year end fund balance, which Salvatore reiterated had originally been anticipated to decrease by $421,000 according to the budget, but after adjustments, had a total of $2.1 million allocated. The favorable revenue and expense figures would mean only $834,348 was being used from fund balance, leaving a 37% fund balance ($11,866,693) at year end.

Salvatore addressed several service level decisions Council would need to address as part of the budget process:

- Street Resurfacing – baseline funding level was not sustainable ($425,000 out of $770,000 total budget was all that was appropriated for actual street resurfacing contracts – the rest was for sealing, patching, striping & supplies)
- Pay Plan – consultant recommendation was to apply Employment Cost Index as an escalation factor for future years. Still no merit system.
- Additional Detective – data supported hiring this new position in order to keep up with case load increases
- Additional Safebuilt Contract Employee – data supports contracting for this additional labor, which would be offset by additional revenues

Salvatore then reviewed the highlights of the City Manager's proposed budget for FY 2016:

- Increased Street Resurfacing line item from $645,232 to $2,575,000
- Funded Bridge Maintenance at $200,000
- Kept Cart Path Maintenance at $440,000
- Included 2.1% Employment Cost Index
- Included new Detective position in Police Department
- Reflected an Annual Golf Cart Registration proposal
- Recommended Millage Rate Increase of 0.65 mills (as opposed to 0.229 in last year's model)

The five-year financial model showed a 0.65 mil increase in the Maintenance & Operations Millage Rate for FY 2016, with no further increases through FY 2020. Meanwhile, the Bond Millage Rate would continue to see reductions each year with no further bonds, and drop to 0 in 2020. The use of fund balance would also decrease each year to zero by 2020, ending with a 30% reserve (approximately 3.5 months of operating funds).

Salvatore indicated the major impacts of the budget highlights was the increase in property assessments (roughly 9.5% before appeals, which translated to a 0.586 mils or $58 on the average homeowner); the proposed millage increase of 0.65, which translated to $70 for the average homeowner. The estimated revenue for 2016, based on the trends observed in 2016, had also been increased by over $1 million over the revenues estimated in last year's for 2016.

Staff also had three alternatives for Council to consider if they did not wish to consider the 0.65 mil increase. The Street Resurfacing program could be decreased to $1.6 million and the employment cost index increase of 2.1% could be eliminated to achieve a 0 millage increase. Alternately, Council could fund the street program at $2.15, still leaving out the employment cost index increase, for a millage rate increase of 0.25 mils. Finally, a 0.5 mil increase would fund the street resurfacing program at $2.599 million, but would still not cover the employment cost index increase.

Finally, Salvatore reviewed the 2016 Public Improvement Program, which included $200,000 for bridge maintenance plus an additional $60,000 to seal timber bridges. There were no Police vehicles scheduled for replacement due to the changed mileage policy. The remainder included routine vehicle and equipment replacements, upgrades to the Municipal Court software (which was delayed to wait for the Police Department's integration of the Spillman software) and routine network upgrades, upgrades to the audio and visual equipment in Council Chambers, and an upgrade to the playground equipment at Glenloch, totaling $1.2 million. Of that, half would be financed on a five-year lease.

King asked what the impact would be of reducing the reserve all the way to 30% in 2016, and would that reduce the City's credit rating. Salvatore said that big of a draw on reserves, when not for a one-time capital expense, caused concern to credit rating agencies and sent up red flags. They looked at both the amount of reserves being used each year and the use of those reserves. Rorie noted that to pave the roads currently on the list was closer to a $6 million project. King said using the funds now would help address that figure. The reserve amount was projected to drop to 30% in 2020, and taking it to that level now to catch up would help in the future.

Rorie said what staff needed was a target amount set for each year for paving. Without that, it was impossible to plan for the future.

King said one of the defined responsibilities Council had was to maintain the City's streets. The poor economy may have been a good reason to defer, but the streets had been neglected, and that was a direct reflection on the image of the City. Rorie concurred that the streets were both a brand and infrastructure investment.

Salvatore also noted that, if a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) passed, a rollback would be possible. King agreed there were advantages, but the City could not bank on it passing.

Fleisch asked how long the City had held a triple A credit rating. Salvatore said since 2006, and Fleisch noted that was through the worst economy in the City's history. Salvatore said the rating was reconfirmed in 2010, during the middle of the recession.

Rory and Salvatore then concluded the presentation and asked for Council input and questions. Salvatore said they had presented a great deal of information, and asked if Council wanted to meet the following evening as originally planned or delay a week until Monday, June 22. Salvatore felt waiting until July 7 was too long and reiterated that the budget was a planning document, and everyone needed to think of it in terms of services and services levels in the coming year. Thinking of it as a dollar amount boxed Council and staff into a corner during the year. Rorie reiterated that July 7 was too long to wait to meet again and did not give staff adequate time to prepare.

Salvatore said staff needed a consensus of what the City would want to present as the proposed budget for the public hearing on July 17. Things could change as a result of that hearing, but the public would be able to comment on what the City was saying it wanted to accomplish in the coming year.

Learnard asked that the presentation be emailed to Council. Imker also suggested posting to the web site.

Fleisch asked members of the audience if they had any comments.

Caren Russell asked Council to think about what image they wanted to maintain for the City. Most residents came here because it was special. They knew they would pay higher taxes for special amenities like the cart paths. The appearance of the City helped with brand and helped bring businesses. During the recession, there had been no increases in millage. The previous year the City had a chance to start getting back to where it should be, but at the last minute went with a 0 increase. Even the 80 rating for streets was too low and was just treading water. If the City did not start to make repairs, the City would continue to deteriorate, losing businesses and residents as it lost elements that brought people here. There might be a vocal minority calling for no taxes, but Council needed to have the courage to face reality and make the best decision for the City and on behalf of those who had invested in the City.

Russell also noted that the Overlook development was moving forward on SR 54 W, which would add the Green T signal intersection. She said it did not make sense to wait years to improve the Planterra intersection. She asked Council to, at a minimum, get the engineering done so staff could begin working with GDOT for approval for construction at the same time as Overlook. She noted the City might even be able to save money if the same contractor working at the Overlook intersection did the Planterra intersection since the equipment would already be on site. This would be a win-win for whole City, those who used the corridor, and the GDOT.

Learnard asked what the possibility would be of also doing the other improvements (signal at Pike Nursery and right-in, right-out at a couple of locations). Learnard asked staff to bring the numbers to Council, possibly the following week.

Rorie said the Pond study identified Planterra and Huddleston as critical improvement locations, but getting firm costs required engineering. Learnard said she did not think Council could reasonably sit there that evening, knowing the traffic was bad, that it would take five years to see the improvements implemented, but not begin looking at it. Rorie agreed saying staff could not do anything without the planning and design. Rorie asked for time to allow staff to look at including those projects in a short and mid-term estimate with potential costs.

Don Haddix said over the years that the City became too dependent on one-time fees. When the development heyday died, a lot of the income died. But it was inaccurate to say there had been no tax increases since 2010, and this year there was already an assessment increase. He said he understood that things had been neglected, but a tax increase impacted people. The bills were getting too high for some to afford, so that needed to be considered. He asked Council to look, not just at spending increases, but at possible decreases in some areas.

Phil Prebor said Council needed to keep the ball rolling regarding SR 54 W and the 54/74 intersection. At a recent Planning Commission meeting, they had been told there was almost 30% vacancy in office property. Council needed to work on the City's brand to fill that space. One way was to improve the Fayette County Development Authority (FCDA) web site as a storefront for business. Code Enforcement could also be improved. Throughout the City, more people were storing boats and trailers on their property, and the grass was getting higher. These things made the community look tired. It was necessary to maintain the infrastructure and the homes to keep Peachtree City a desirable place to live.

Imker said this was the first workshop, and that he agreed next Monday would be a good time to follow up. July 7 was the final workshop, and staff had scheduled July 30 for the adoption. Imker said he would come back with a two-hour briefing, probably sometime in August, with his numbers. Imker did not respond when asked why he would wait that long to provide input.

Imker continued that he had several comments about the presentation that evening. He agreed the 9.5% assessments would drop following appeals. He asked Rorie to double check with the City Attorney regarding the City's ability to charge the golf cart fee every year. Rorie noted that legislation signed the previous year allowed it, and he would forward the City Attorney's email confirming that. Imker said he could not see doing the registration every year. Rorie agreed, saying they were envisioning doing it in three or five-year increments.

Imker said that seven items had been highlighted related to the 0.65 mil increase. He only agreed with the detective position, the bridge maintenance, and golf cart fee going to $15. He could not agree with a millage increase, and disagreed with the approach. The fair market value increase was adding over half a mil, and he suggested a 0.25 rollback, and said he would show how to come up with over $2 million before he was done.

Imker reiterated Haddix's comments that Russell was mistaken and there had been millage increases over the past five years, including a 1.25 mil increase in 2011. Russell said she was referring specifically to the previous year, but those increases had only maintained the status quo and did not address the decline in Peachtree City; the standards had not gone up.

Imker said the millage rate in Roswell and Alpharetta were half a mil lower than Peachtree City, and there was a reason for that because the City had 90 miles of cart paths. For Russell to say they were under-taxing the citizens was a great misnomer.

Imker continued that the past year the budget called for the use of $1.2 million in reserves; instead, they added $1.2 million to reserves because of delayed road maintenance, deferred payments, etc. Staff's presentation said $600,000 had been used for road maintenance. But it could just as easily be said that the $600,000 was used for salary increases.

Imker said he appreciated staff's six-page introduction to the budget talking about the funds received from the 2005 SPLOST. However, it did not mention that the City could get nearly $7 million per year if they did a new SPLOST, a greater amount without the funding to the County for the West Fayette Bypass. Fleisch pointed out that staff's role was not to include hypotheticals in the official budget.

Imker said nothing in the presentation or budget regarding the salary adjustment addressed salary compression. However, that was a $1.2 million impact that was missing from the budget. Even so, Imker said he could still show how they could get $2 million without those figures.

Imker said staff wanted to spend $2.5 million on roads, but taking $800,000 would still leave $1.7 million, and he could show how to increase that and increase path paving from $400,000 to $1 million. He said he was disappointed that, after Council giving it their highest priority at Retreat, staff had not addressed increasing path paving. Fleisch said Rorie had covered increasing the path paving. Rorie confirmed that his presentation that evening covered taking the paving amount from six miles to nine miles. King said doing anything further would require more funding than already requested. Imker said it should have been presented that evening. King said it had been. Imker said he expected to see a proposal for two or three more employees. Ernst said Rorie had discussed adding an entire crew, seven employees, to the path paving initiative. Imker asked if he had discussed it that night, and multiple Councilmembers confirmed this. Imker apologized.

Imker said he agreed with King's concept of reducing the cash reserves, saying the triple A credit rating was awarded when the City went out for a bond. No bond was forthcoming in the near future, so if the City came down to 33% reserves, they would not have to raise the millage rate. There was also a half million dollars left from the 2014. Staff was anticipating savings of $700,000 this year. He felt LOST revenues and Hotel/Motel Tax would be above what staff was estimating, as would several other revenues. He said they should eliminate the salary increase this year and consider a salary decrease. That gave about $2 million extra and would let the City reduce the fair market value hit homeowners would see. King noted that the tax increase reflected an increase in the value of homes, which Fleisch added was a person's single biggest investment. Fleisch noted that home values increasing was a good thing because it reduced rentals and signaled an improved economy. Fleisch said in 2013, Fayette County had lost 22% of its tax digest.

Imker said Salvatore's projections for assessment increases in the coming years were low, and were too conservative. The City had been so conservative in revenue projection and so liberal in expense projections that they had fouled up the budget to the point of needing a meeting in November to determine the actual financial status. Excess money was always put in reserves. He said the City should take that money out and spend it. They could then give the homeowners a tax break. Peachtree City was back to where it was before the bad economy. Fleisch said that was not true.

Learnard said a prediction model that was slightly less conservative would probably be reasonable.

Imker said staff projected salary savings due to vacant positions at 2%. He said the vacant positions right now could increase that. That was why they needed to go over the financial standing in November.

Ernst asked why Council and staff had to wait until August to hear Imker's proposal. Imker said he did not have any ideas yet. Fleisch said he had been talking for twenty-five minutes about his ideas. Ernst stressed that August was too late in the process. Imker said if they were going to have a final budget the following week, they should just adopt it then. They had hearings so they could possibly adjust the budget, and he had proposed adjustments the previous year, and they were substantial.

Ernst asked Imker if he was a financial expert. Imker said that was a relative term. Ernst said Imker worked very hard on the budget, and he knew it was his passion, but noted that government finance was what Salvatore did professionally. Imker said that was like asking Ernst if he had been a leader in the Police Department. Ernst said he was. Imker asked if Pye had been a leader. Ernst said Pye had been and still was a leader.

Learnard said Imker had brought up some good ideas that evening, and she would like to hear more about them, and hear about them sooner rather than later.

Imker said they were considering a 1.2 mil tax increase on the residents. Ernst said that was by Imker's reasoning, and King pointed out half of that increase had nothing to do with the City, but was due to the assessments. King said, even if the budget and millage increase were approved that evening, both the reassessment and the millage increase would amount to $128 on an average home. King continued that he agreed with Russell and had moved to Peachtree City for a reason. While $128 was a lot of money on a tax bill, it was not when considered in the context of a $250,000 home.

Learnard said Mr. Haddix had noted some residents could not afford that kind of increase, and she felt there was a middle ground to be found. She reiterated that she would like to hear more on Imker's ideas, and sooner rather than later.

King said Imker's continued injection of his sour grapes over the previous year's vote on the pay plan needed to be left out of the conversation.

Learnard said they had discussed earmarking funds for traffic engineering on the west side, but they also needed to acknowledge whether the City wanted a connection from Overlook to the Line Creek Nature Area and MacDuff Crossing. Further, if the City wanted that connection, they needed to be a participant in funding the project. Southern Conservation Trust (SCT) maintained a crown jewel there, but did not have a strong motivation to sacrifice to make the road happen. She did not feel the developer would fund the entire project, so the City needed to be willing to participate to some extent. Ernst agreed.

Imker said he liked the idea of coming back the following Monday to give Council a chance to reflect on the numbers and decide to what level they wanted to fund the road maintenance. It would have been nice to have an extra $4 to $5 million from a SPLOST, but that was not going to happen this year.

Ernst agreed that the following Monday was a good date, and said he wanted to hear Imker's presentation at that time. Imker said there was so much data to put together. Ernst said Imker had already been working on it, and Imker said he had been working on it the entire year.

Caren Russell asked to address a comment Imker had directed at her, saying she was not saying the residents were under-taxed. If that had been Imker's take-away, she was sorely disappointed. What she was saying was that the City had to identify its image, figure out how to maintain it, and then budget to maintain it.

Rorie recapped that the workshop had been for Council and staff was to explore options, but staff could not move without a funding base from which to work. The millage rate and budget provided a base, but was a fluid document that was implemented throughout the year to meet the demands of the community.

Council agreed to cancel the Tuesday, June 16, workshop and meet again on Monday, June 22, at 7:00 p.m.

Imker asked Council to consider whether the reserves could be lowered by an additional $1 million. Learnard also asked them to consider that such a reduction made financial directors cringe. Salvatore noted that the challenge with a dramatic reduction in the reserves was not for 2016, but came the following year. Every year, they discussed kicking the can down the road. Maybe a SPLOST would be approved and that would eliminate the need for the use of reserves, and even allow for a millage decrease. Salvatore noted that SPLOSTs allowed cities like Roswell to have lower millage rates.

The workshop ended at 8:40 p.m.

Betsy Tyler, City Clerk

Vanessa Fleisch, Mayor