

City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 18, 2023
6:30 PM

Call to Order

The Mayor and City Council of Peachtree City met in regular session on Thursday, May 18, 2023. Mayor Kim Learnard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Other Council Members in attendance were Phil Prebor, Mike King, Clinton Holland and Frank Destadio.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognition

Holland stated this was Military Appreciation Month, and the City wanted to salute those who were serving with the hope that they come home safely.

Presentation

A. Peachtree City Art Passport

Matthew Thornton was not able to attend and asked that presentation be moved to June 1, 2023.

Public Comment

Rick Owen of Broken Bit Way told Council that his dog had been attacked and injured in his yard by two dogs that ran the neighborhood. His daughter saw the attack, which was broken up only when the dogs' owner arrived. Since the attack, Owen said he had discovered numerous incidences of these dogs biting humans and other animals and was told by the County that the owner had been cited three times in the past five years regarding these dogs. He said he had talked with County Commissioner Eric Maxwell, and Animal Control had deemed the dogs dangerous, but nothing more had been done. Owen said he did not know what else he could do, but he wanted Council to be aware of this situation. He presented them with a letter and said he would appreciate their help.

Suzanne Brown spoke out against annexing more land into the City, saying she did not support uncontrolled growth, and property owners only had the right to use the land as it was zoned when they purchased it. Brown added that special care must be taken in a conservation district and with wetlands. She said no one should purchase property with the expectation that it would be annexed into the City. Also, the Land Use Plan stated that the least dense developments should be on the edge of the City, and 1.8 acre-lots did not meet that requirement. She noted that annexation carried the obligation to extend City services and although less dense developments would bring in more taxes to pay for that, current taxpayers would still have to subsidize development in the annexed area. She feared more annexations would follow.

Agenda Changes

King moved to pull Consent Agenda item #A for short discussion. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

A. May 2, 2023 Workshop Minutes

King moved to approve the May 2, 2023, workshop minutes. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. May 4, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

King moved to approve the May 4, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Holland seconded. Motion carried 4-0-1, with Destadio abstaining due to his absence from that meeting.

C. May 4, 2023, Executive Session Minutes

King moved to approve the May 4, 2023, executive session minutes. Holland seconded. Motion carried 4-0-1, with Destadio abstaining due to his absence from that meeting.

Consent Agenda

Destadio moved to approve Consent Agenda items B-D. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A. Policy 8-06 Naming of Facilities, Parks & Other Areas

King said he wanted to discuss if there should be a limit on how many of these recognitions Council could bestow in a year, saying too many would cheapen the honor. He wanted the stipulation of only one per annum.

Prebor said one might not be enough, but five was too many, so he did not know what the magic number would be.

Holland liked the idea of limiting it to one per year in order to keep it special but said there could be exceptions in special cases.

Destadio said they could not continue to change it every time they had a whim. It should be limited, but not too much.

Who made the nominations? Prebor asked. Learnard said Council had the power to limit the number of nominations they accepted.

King said they could change the language from "nomination" to "approval." City Attorney Ted Meeker explained that requests would go to the City Clerk, who would pass it on to the City Manager for inclusion on the next agenda. Meeker pointed out that it required unanimous Council approval, and there was no limit on the number they could consider.

Could they amend it to say "one per annum?" Holland asked, and Learnard said the City Manager and Assistant City Manager could take another look.

Meeker asked when was the last time something had been named for someone? and King said it was Dan Lakly Boulevard. Meeker recalled that was 10 or 15 years ago. That was a long time ago, Prebor noted, and the Mayor agreed there were not many requests.

Assistant City Manager Justin Strickland remarked that if the number was limited, especially to one, they would have to really define what the process would be. If it was one, then on January 1st, the first person to get their nomination in would be it for the year. Holland said they would not have to make a decision when the nomination was made; they could postpone it.

Learnard said it did not necessarily have to mean calendar year; she noted there were four in the pipeline right now. After 15 years, that was not a surprise, nor was it excessive, she observed.

King moved to table Consent Agenda item A, Policy 8-06, Naming of Facilities, Parks and Other Areas, until such time as staff was prepared. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Consider Title/Grade Change for CVB Employee - Sales Manager

APPROVED 5-0

C. Consider Title/Grade Change for CVB Employee - Visitor's Center Manager

APPROVED 5-0

D. FY-24 Budget Amendment and Purchase of Council Chambers/Courtroom Audiovisual Equipment

APPROVED 5-0

Old Agenda Items

None

New Agenda Items

A. 05-23-06 First Reading of Filming Ordinance

Recreation Programs Manager Cathy Wilder reminded Council that she described the proposed film permit ordinance at the last Council meeting, so this would be a brief review. It provided guidelines, procedures, and fees for the purpose of issuing film permits in the city. It was to encourage film productions while protecting the City's and the residents' best interests.

Some proposed regulations regarding how permit applications would be submitted included establishing a central point of contact at the Recreation Department. An application fee would be established and must be paid within 10 days of the start of filming or a rush fee could be imposed.

The application would be reviewed, and the departments that would be impacted by filming, such as Fire, Police, and Recreation, would meet to discuss the needs of the project. Then the permit would be approved or denied.

A permit would be required if filming activities impacted public space. Property owners must submit written permission, and neighbors and nearby businesses must be notified. The Police Department would have to oversee road, path, and sidewalk closures.

The ordinance covered violations. There would be a \$1,000 a day fine for non-permitted filming, plus double the cost of the filming permit. There would be a \$1,000 a day fine for violating the conditions of the permit.

The application fee would be \$200, and a high-impact film would pay \$350. High-impact conditions included closure or restricted access to City property, a crew larger than 50, anything that altered the landscape, special effects, anything that required City assistance or

resources, and setting up of tents or other temporary structures. A rush fee would be required if they were asking to film with less than 10 days' notice. Changes to the permit within 72 hours of scheduled filming would cost an additional \$200.

It would cost \$75 for a City Staff member to show a site, and if a Staff member was needed on-site during filming, the cost would be \$150 per four hours and \$200 per four hours over 12 hours. The cost for a Police officer or Emergency Medical Technician on-site would remain at the current \$50 per hour.

A deposit of \$1,000 was required and would be refunded if the site was left undamaged, Wilder continued. The current fee schedule would be used for filming at recreation facilities if the facility could remain open to the public. The cost for use of a City-owned parking lot for parking would be \$250, while closure of a City-owned parking lot would cost \$1,000 a day.

The complete closure of a low-impact City facility, such as a small park, would start at \$4,000 a day, plus any affected cost of salaries and benefits of personnel and revenue. Higher-impact closures, such as Line Creek or Picnic Park, would start at \$20,000 a day, plus City expenses. These closures would require the approval of the City Manager, Wilder added.

Holland recalled when a production filmed for three nights in his neighborhood, and it blocked the road so that residents could not get through. Did this ordinance address this? Wilder said there were provisions about having a clear line of sight, not blocking stop signs, leaving a path for emergency vehicles, and so on. This would be addressed during the pre-filming meeting, Wilder explained.

Destadio said this was a well-written ordinance.

Strickland reminded them there was no requirement that they have a second reading.

Destadio moved to approve New Agenda item 05-23-06, Filming Ordinance. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 05-23-07 FY2024 Non-Profit Funding Request - Fayette County Council on Domestic Violence d/b/a Promise Place

City Clerk Yasmin Julio said she would combine this and the next item on the agenda. Each year Council allotted \$25,000 for the funding of nonprofits, with \$10,000 going to the Fayette County Council on Domestic Violence, usually known as Promise Place, and \$15,000 to Fayette Senior Services. This would be for fiscal year 2024.

Learnard said these were the amounts they had historically provided over the years on the premise that they provided needed services for Peachtree City citizens that the City did not provide. She suggested they continue.

Holland asked if anyone had any suggestions for other groups that might be deserving? but Learnard said she thought they should leave it as it was now. Prebor said they could look into this in the future, and Holland said he would. He wanted to spread the money around more.

Destadio said they had looked at one other, and Council decided against it.

King moved to approve New Agenda item 05-23-07, Non-Profit Funding Request-Fayette County Council on Domestic Violence d/b/a Promise Place in the amount of \$10,000. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

C. 05-23-08 FY2024 Non-Profit Funding Request - Fayette Senior Services

King moved to approve New Agenda item 05-23-08, Non-Profit Funding Request-Fayette Senior Services in the amount of \$15,000. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

D. 05-23-09 Resolution to Pledge to Practice and Promote Civility in the City of Peachtree City

Strickland, sitting in for absent City Manager Robert Curnow, said this was a statewide initiative proposed by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). Peachtree City had been a GMA-certified City of Ethics since January, 2000. That meant they recognized five principles, including to serve others, not themselves, and to use resources with efficiency and economy, along with treating all people fairly, using the power of their position for the good of their constituents, and creating an environment of honesty, openness, and integrity.

These types of things were not ordinances or policies, Strickland continued, but pledges of how Council would conduct themselves that would filter down through to staff and how they wanted to hold themselves beyond their ordinances.

He reflected that this could tie into the vision statement, core values, and communication and behavior agreements that Council and staff developed during their retreat in March. They shared common concepts such as teamwork, professionalism, and responsibility, which were all related to ethics and civility.

GMA said civility was about disagreeing without being disrespectful and staying present even with those with whom they had fierce disagreement. Strickland said a 2019 survey found that 93% of Americans believed incivility was a problem, and 68% identified it as a major problem. The GMA said cities needed to counteract the polarization and challenges caused by incivility.

GMA offered nine pillars of civility: consideration of others' opinions, minding your emotions, remembering that a silent voice was not a weak voice, being kind, actively listening, thinking about the impact, asking questions to learn, remembering to quit taking it personally (QTIP), and having empathy.

Strickland finished with the civility pledge: *"The way we govern ourselves is often as important as the positions we take. Our collective decisions will be better when differing views have had the opportunity to be fully vetted and considered. All people have the right to be treated with respect, courtesy and openness. We value all input. We commit to conduct ourselves at all times with civility and courtesy to each other."*

It was appropriate to hark back to the two-day retreat, Learnard remarked, because they made new efforts towards teamwork, respect, and civility. She said it was more joyful because City Department heads were included, and a lot of good work got done. Civility was a

framework for effective government, she noted.

Destadio said they needed to be civil, and he believed they all tried as best they could, even though they did not always get along. If he had an issue with someone, he wanted to meet face-to-face and resolve it. He thought this pledge would be a good thing to do. There had been emails that kind of made a joke out of this, Destadio continued, but he thought it went right along with what was done at the retreat. Destadio said if he took a pledge to do something he would do it, so he was in favor of them adopting this.

Holland commented that although he liked the idea of taking a civility pledge, he felt it sounded a little “woke.” However, he said he could support this because he recognized that civility was important, not just for Council, but for everyone.

King recalled the incivility among the Mayor and Council when he first ran for office in 2013. He cautioned that there would be times when someone would touch someone’s nerves by asking pointed questions. That was the “wokeness” he was concerned about. He did not want them to approve something just because they could. His oath of office told him how he should behave, and he wanted to caution them if they approved this.

Prebor said it was the way they should be doing things anyway, but if the City Manager thought it would improve the culture of the City, he saw no reason to vote against it. King agreed.

King moved to approve New Agenda item 05-23-09, Resolution to Pledge to Practice and Promote Civility in the City of Peachtree City. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

E. 05-23-10 Step 1 Annexation Request for 400 Stagecoach Road, about 52 acres

Planning and Development Director Robin Cailloux explained there was a two-step process for annexation because the State process was very time-constrained, expensive for the applicant, and time-consuming for staff to review. Making annexation a two-step process allowed them to first consider whether annexation would generally meet their goals as a city. If so, they could move forward in the process, and if not, the process would end. Accepting Step One did not mean the annexation was approved.

This property was on the northeast side of the city, and Cailloux showed the location on a zoning map, pointing out SR 54, Robinson Road, the new middle school, the current municipal boundary, and Spear Road. This request regarded 52 acres, which was highlighted on the map. It was currently zoned in Fayette County as A-R, which was agriculture-residential, with minimum five-acre lots.

The request was to annex and zone to Estate Residential (ER), which had a three-acre lot minimum, and Limited Use Residential (LUR), which Cailloux said was a very site-specific zoning. They were requesting a total of 23 lots in two separate subdivisions; two would be in one subdivision, zoned ER, and the other 21 would be 1.8 acres in the second subdivision zoned LUC. The two estate lots would have access only from Stagecoach Road, while the other homes would have access only from Spear. The applicant had submitted a plan showing the

two subdivisions, and Cailloux pointed out the location of a significant creek, Camp Creek, that ran through the property.

By ordinance, staff was not permitted to give a recommendation, but was only allowed to compare it with policies from the Comprehensive Plan. She also showed a graphic of the 2014 growth boundary areas and said this site was considered then, but not included as a recommendation.

The Comp Plan policies that might apply included the step down in density as you moved away from the village center. There was a policy that encouraged housing options to accommodate aging in place, working from home, and multi-generational families, while protecting the residential character of established neighborhoods. There was a policy of preserving lakes, wetlands, flood plains, major streams, minor drainage systems, and permanent open space. There was a policy to encourage alternate modes of transportation such as biking, walking, and low-speed carts by providing multi-use path connections. She went back to the plan again to show that, although the roads did not connect, a multi-use path was proposed to connect a cul-de-sac to Stagecoach.

Staff had done some research on progress on Stagecoach Road, which the City contributed money towards for construction. The road had been constructed, but the right-of-way to the City had not been officially dedicated because some legal work was still needed. There might be some issues with the property that would have access only through Stagecoach, Cailloux stated.

Attorney Rick Lindsey said he was representing the applicant, Hyde Park Properties II, LLC. Owner Michael Hyde was in the audience to answer questions if needed. He reiterated that the ER properties would be connected to Stagecoach, and the others would have access through Spear. The multi-use path would connect the two components.

Lindsey said they had communicated with Southern Conservation Trust (SCT) about the wetlands on this property. He mentioned that Booth Middle School had a program where students became more familiar with nature, and these wetlands and the creek could be used in that.

This property had been before Council before, Lindsey noted, but that was before the school was constructed. He stated they needed approval of Step One so they could engage in conversations with staff, the school, SCT and bring a complete design and well-thought out annexation plan to the Planning Commission and Council.

How many acres were they talking about preserving with SCT? Learnard asked, and Lindsey said about 12 acres of the 52. They had submitted a letter from SCT about their willingness to work with them.

Learnard also wanted to know about public safety concerns regarding access. Cailloux said this was not an automatic aid area. Automatic aid ended at Camp Creek. However, there was a mutual aid agreement with the County, and she said she had been told by Fire and Police that more often than not, the County called upon Peachtree City to answer these calls.

Destadio read from SCT's letter about their desire to preserve greenspace and recreational

areas. Lindsey said they certainly would not be putting a park in there, and a lot of things needed to be worked out. Destadio said he wanted to make it clear that SCT was not driving this, but was willing to work with the developers.

Destadio also stated he did not see how this development would comply with the Comprehensive Plan goal of step-down in density or of providing housing for aging in place, working from home, or multi-generational families. He said it seemed kind of far out for people to be taking paths. He had thought it would be more multi-family or mixed use housing, but this looked like larger homes.

But that is what they wanted there, Learnard remarked. The Comp Plan called for low-density land use in areas on the outskirts of town. They would not support townhomes in this area for that reason, she noted, and Destadio agreed. Learnard said she would prefer two three-acre lots and 21 1.8-acre lots.

Destadio asked about something in Lindsey's submission, and Lindsey said these would be homes priced at close to \$1 million.

The Mayor asked about access to Stagecoach Road, and Lindsey said it would be paved and extended past where the middle school road ended. The developer would pave the road as far as the cul-de-sac access.

She asked Council why they would not approve Step One since the only risk was staff time? They did not want to go through all the work to get to Step Two if Council would not be willing to consider the request. She asked Cailloux if there was a risk to passing Step One, and Cailloux said there was no obligation from Council to approve a Step Two if they approved a Step One. However, Learnard said she did not want to waste staff time if there was no intent to consider the project.

Destadio asked for further explanation of the impact of Fire and Police support to this area. Did they have the resources? Fire Chief Clint Murphy said the impact would be negligible. They went to calls on Spear Road maybe once or twice a year, he stated. Some houses there already were in Peachtree City.

Assistant Police Chief Matt Myers said the Sheriff's Department would probably call Peachtree City currently if there was an urgent call in this area, so annexation would not create concerns.

Prebor said he was familiar with Hyde's products and Peachtree City certainly needed new houses. He did not like having to go outside the City and also disliked that the City did not own Stagecoach Road. He did not want to waste staff time, but he would be in favor of pursuing Step One.

King said there was mention in the packet about a covenant restriction regarding access to Spear. Lindsey said his client acquired the deed with that covenant from Mr. Davis, who did not want school buses going past his house. They could cut it off and run the cul-de-sac from Stagecoach, but that was something they would have to talk to staff about.

Holland was concerned about the tie-in of Stagecoach to the cul-de-sac. There would be paths in there, but it would not be connected for vehicles. Was he correct in understanding there

was a covenant preventing that? Lindsey said the covenant was on the southern part of the property. It did not say you could not connect Spear with Stagecoach. He again said this was something they would have to discuss with staff. The promise to Mr. Davis was that they would not build a road that could take the buses from the school down to Spear.

Holland said he was worried because emergency response vehicles could not get from Spear to the school. The path, Lindsey noted, would be designed so a police car or a fire truck could use it. Residents also could use it if the bridge over the creek washed out, but it would not be in daily use for traffic.

Adding access from Spear Road would help him vote for this, Holland remarked, but at this point he saw too much density, and he was not in favor.

Lindsey had said he would like to address these concerns, but he needed the opportunity to do so during Step One, Prebor commented, adding he saw no reason not to approve Step One.

Holland mentioned the 1.8-acre lots, saying he did not know why they had to have that type of density. Why could they not go to larger lots and bring down the number of houses? Prebor again said that was something he could work with through staff. Holland said Lindsey could probably address that right now.

Destadio broke in to say this was not a public hearing. He asked Cailloux about the covenant, saying Lindsey said he could work with staff. Lindsey said the covenant was not on Davis' property; he sold it to Hyde. Was there a way they could work that out? Destadio asked, wondering if it was denied tonight, could they could bring it back?

Destadio again said that there was something to be worked out in the deed, but Lindsey said the deed had been filed. He said he meant that they would not connect the road that came off Spear with the other road off of Stagecoach. There would be a cart path wide enough for emergency vehicles.

Twice he had said he needed to work with staff to figure out something in that area, Destadio continued. Lindsey said Prebor had asked if they could connect all of this to Stagecoach and maybe that is what Destadio was thinking of. He would need to talk with staff.

Cailloux asked if they were asked about flipping the cul-de-sacs, and Lindsey said that was something they needed to consult with staff about. They needed Step One approval to continue the conversation. Strickland cautioned Destadio that this was not a staff proposal, but they could ask staff to look at other options. Destadio said he understood, but stated that Lindsey had a tendency to talk about things to staff in advance.

Learnard said what she saw was a proposal for 23 beautiful upscale homes located in the right part of town. Prebor agreed. She said she was pleased there was a potential of 12 acres conserved for the benefit of students at the middle school. If they got to the point where this was approved and built, it was something she could be proud of.

Prebor moved to approve New Agenda item 05-23-10, Step One Annexation Request for 400 Stagecoach Road, about 52 Acres. King seconded. Motion carried 3-2, with Learnard, King, and Prebor voting in favor, and Destadio and Holland voting against.

Public Hearings

A. 05-23-11 Variance request for fence requirements at 200 Sierra Dr., CertainTEED

Cailloux showed the location in the Industrial Park. She said this was one of the older properties there, built in the 1970s, and currently undergoing a major expansion. They had put up this new fence around the laydown yard, which was where the finished product was stored before it went out for delivery. They erected this fence without a permit, and when it did come in for a permit review, staff denied the permit because the fence did not meet requirements. CertainTeed approached the City to find out how they could keep this fence.

The ordinance said that chain link fences in a front yard, even for industrial uses, had to be vinyl coated and no more than six feet high. This fence was not vinyl coated and exceeded six feet because of the addition of barbed wire at the top for additional security. Cailloux showed the location of the fence on the property and indicated SR 74 and Sierra Drive. She pointed out the building and said the airport was behind them. There was a gate opening on to Sierra Drive. There was an existing 60-foot undisturbed buffer between the existing fence and the right-of-way.

Micah Pace said he was the chief engineer for this project, explaining they added an additional eight acres of ground coverage for finished product storage as part of an expansion project called "Project Relay," which would increase their production 250% when finished. Pace noted they had been in the community since 1974 and wanted to remain here. Their site was only 23 acres, he stated, and this area where the laydown yard was had been woods up to a year and a half ago. It was cleared to create an area for storage of 300,000 roofing shingles, which was a month's worth of production. The new fence would secure about \$33 million of inventory at capacity. It was the same type of fencing they had all around their property and the same fencing used just down the road by the Federal Aviation Administration at the airport.

Pace said he was asking Council to allow them to keep the fence. They put it in with the understanding that they could extend the existing fencing, and the contractors did not know, nor did he, that they needed a permit.

He presented photos that showed this was the same or very similar fencing to what was around the rest of the property. It was all chain link, made of galvanized steel. This fence was good because they needed to keep an open line of sight coming off SR 74 into the entrance for truck traffic. There would be a one-way traffic pattern once everything was developed, he stated. He again asked Council to approve this fence as is, saying the barbed wire at the top was vital for securing the inventory. Pace pointed out the tree buffer and said the only point where the yard was visible was through the entrance off SR 74.

The Mayor opened the public hearing. Suzanne Brown said she was in favor of this variance because Council should support industries and encourage expansion. Piper Hill agreed, saying the taxes from the inventory at that industry would be more than taxes from the tiny lots on the land being annexed. No one else wished to speak, and Learnard closed the public hearing.

King suggested adding shrubbery at the entrance, keeping it below cab height. He agreed that this fence was similar to what was already there, and he had no problem with it.

Destadio asked about the 60-foot buffer and noted there was quite a bit of landscaping blocking the view. He noted they would be hit with a double permit fee for constructing the fence without a permit, and warned that the Planning Commission would probably ask for landscaping at the gate.

Holland agreed with the suggestion of landscaping at the entrance, and Prebor said evergreens could be planted. Pace asked him to clarify where he was talking about and said he was okay with that. Holland said the Planning Commission could offer suggestions.

Learnard noted there was a condition about this listed in the staff report.

Prebor moved to approve Public Hearing 05-23-11, variance request for fence requirements at 200 Sierra Drive with the recommendation from staff that additional evergreen landscaping be added between the fence and the public right-of-way. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 05-23-12 Capital Improvement Element annual update and transmittal to State for review

Because Peachtree City collected impact fees, Cailloux said, the State had additional requirements, among them an annual review of the Capital Improvement Element (CIE). It would come before Council for adoption after State approval. The submission had to include the five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), already adopted in the FY 2023 budget, as well as the impact fee financial report for FY 2022, which used the audited numbers from the FY 2022 budget to report exactly how the impact fee money was spent. A public hearing was required.

The report included a table that showed the funds in the earmarked accounts as of September 30, 2021, all the impact fees that were collected from development over that year, and any expenditures during the year. For example, Cailloux said \$2.8 million was in the Parks and Recreation fund at the beginning of FY 22. They collected \$1.3 million and spent \$355,000, leaving a balance of \$3.8 million in the account at the end of FY 22.

Learnard opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak either in favor or in opposition, and she closed the hearing.

King moved to approve Public Hearing 05-23-12, Capital Improvement Element annual update and transmittal to State for review. Destadio seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

A. Police Updates

Myers said he wanted to start by bragging on the effort the Department put into complying with the continually evolving best practices. They were in their 30th year of accreditation from

the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), which was the gold standard for accreditation for law enforcement agencies. The Department was in its 10th year of accreditation with excellence under the Gold Standard Assessment, which focused less on examining policies and more on observation and speaking with personnel. Of the 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the country, only 236 held accreditation with excellence, Myers reported. They also recently had achieved the Gold Meritorious Award from the Georgia Association of the Chiefs of Police, awarded for 20-plus years of State certification.

Community projects played a central role in the organization. Myers said they had held 224 community events this year, including Coffee with a Cop and the Citizens Police Academy. Later this summer would be two sessions of Junior Police Academy, always a popular event.

He went on to look at Part One crimes, January through April 2019 through 2023. There was a downturn in 2020 and 2021, but now this was trending back up. While violent crimes, such as rape and murder, were Part One crimes, larceny made up 87% of Part One crimes in Peachtree City. Larceny included theft, shoplifting, and entering auto. The stats often fluctuated, depending on the policies of major retailers. The increase in 2023 was due to changes in reporting policies. Numbers for other types of Part One crimes remained steady.

Part Two crimes had trended differently, going up over the past two years, but showing a drop in 2023. Part Two was driving under the influence (DUI), criminal damage, forgeries, and so on. He attributed the change in Part Two crimes to an upswing in felony drug cases over the last few years, but they seemed to be trending down this year, although Myers said he would not be surprised to see it trend back up now that some of their staffing challenges had been addressed.

They had seen some concerning increases in DUIs, Myers remarked, saying this year was trending down, but nowhere near the level it was a few years ago. Daytime DUIs had markedly increased over the past couple of years. DUI cases had increased along a similar pattern.

The next slide, he explained, demonstrated how an element of society responded to law enforcement when they were called to investigate. Over the last several years, Peachtree City Police, like most law enforcement agencies, had undertaken an enormous amount of training in de-escalation techniques and avoiding the use of force, but they continued to be pressed to the point where it was often unavoidable. There had been a significant increase in the number of cases that required some response to aggression. That also extended to pursuits and what he called "a general atmosphere of non-compliance." To date in 2023, they had already logged the highest year ever in several categories. Officer injuries had gone up accordingly.

To deal with this, Myers said they had instituted a couple more training programs, including Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, which emphasized grappling holds that would reduce the potential of injury to officers and suspects. The Department provided membership at a local studio to any interested officer and allowed them to train on duty, schedule permitting. This program had already been very successful. Also, nine people on staff had completed the Gracie Survival Tactics instructor course and were holding classes.

A few years ago, there were few local officers trained in precision intervention, which reduced the risks in vehicle pursuits, because it was so hard to book slots in the program. They were

able to reach an agreement with the Georgia Public Safety Training Center for the use of the track and vehicles, and started running their own course. Now Peachtree City had three instructors in-house and nearly 90% of the force was trained.

One of the projects in the 2023 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) was to replace their drone, Myers said, and that would improve their search and rescue capability. Another SPLOST project was to add two new K9 officers, bringing the total up to four, and replacing two K9s who would be retiring soon.

He went over some other training programs and priorities, including crisis intervention to help people having mental health crises. They also offered a lot of advanced DUI programs. Peachtree City was participating in a new phlebotomist program, and four officers were now trained to draw blood. They had a robust active shooter training program that all officers participated in. Officer resiliency courses gave the officers tools to handle stress, Myers explained. Also, the crisis negotiation team had been expanded, and the training enhanced.

He went back to a slide they used in April to show applications and hires versus people leaving. Myers said he was not sure they would be able to rebound from the disproportionate number of departures compared to new hires. They had since made some changes to the compensation package and had seen some significant changes in the application trend. They were up to 46 applications year to date; last year, they got just 59 the entire year. If that trend continued, they would have a 170% increase in applications over 2022, making it the highest year since 2015. They currently had seven vacancies, with five more officers eligible for retirement. But this week alone, Myers reported, they interviewed five certified officers, and five uncertified applicants, with a couple more scheduled for next week. Not only were the numbers up, he stated, but the quality of applicants had significantly improved. For the first time in awhile, Myers remarked, he felt positive about staffing.

Council thanked him for an excellent presentation.

B. UDO Council Liaisons

This was placed on the agenda by Curnow, Strickland stated. It came to staff's attention from some Council Members that there was concern after the first Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Steering Committee meeting about the direction of the committee and its purpose. Curnow had recommended the Council appoint two members to serve on the committee. Curnow, Strickland continued, also recommended a joint meeting between Council, the Steering Committee, and the consultants from Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC), the company doing the UDO. Strickland said Curnow told him he wanted everybody in the same room together to learn about the purpose of the UDO and the process.

Learnard said she had thought they would task staff and Curnow with the job of laying out the UDO purpose and the role of the committee. Strickland said he had asked Curnow if they should create a sheet outlining how the UDO should proceed. Curnow agreed they could do that, but said the meeting needed to happen. They could bring that sheet to the meeting.

Prebor said he, Curnow, and Cailloux had a meeting to discuss this. They discussed the survey,

and he said Cailloux said she could outline about 100 issues that had come up in her tenure regarding inconsistencies in ordinances. Prebor said he would like to ask the public to relate some of their experiences with the ordinances and ask the consultants to look at them. Prebor used fences as an example of where the ordinances could be confusing. He would like to see the consultants work on those 100, plus the public's contributions. At that point, it could be brought to the committee.

Destadio said he thought they were missing the purpose of the UDO. He said it was to look at the different design standards and update them and get rid of duplication. He added that it was not to go through any of the other ordinances; that should be the job of the consultants, not the committee. He mentioned an email they had received from a committee member expressing concern about what they would be doing. The committee was told they would look at how they could accelerate the Comprehensive Plan. But, he stated, that was not their responsibility.

Prebor said this could be addressed at the meeting, adding he believed they all thought they would be looking at the inconsistencies and redundancies in the ordinances--not just the design standards.

Destadio said he said when he and Holland met with Curnow that he was not in favor of all the committee members being at the first meeting. Council should get together and decide what they thought should be happening. There were problems stemming from what the committee thought was written in the Council meeting minutes when this was discussed. Destadio thought Council should agree on the committee's role before bringing them back. He thought listening to Council debate might make them more confused.

Learnard said she sympathized with the committee member. They needed clear instruction. She wanted them to task staff with laying out in writing what the project was and how they would handle it. Council could talk about that.

Destadio advised Cailloux that he would start this process by reviewing the minutes that stated what the committee would do. A committee member said that differed from what they were told by the consultant.

The bottom line, King remarked, was that they established a committee and gave them instructions that got miscommunicated. Now they had a process: they would have this meeting, come up with what exactly they wanted to do, and lay it out before they brought everybody back in.

Managing expectations was what they should be doing, Holland commented. Once that was done, they could give instructions to the committee.

Council agreed this was what they would do.

C. Ordinance #1206 and Policy 4-07

They had talked about ordinance 1206 at least once or twice, Destadio remarked, when they discussed allowing citizens to get up and speak. While he missed the last Council meeting, he read in the packet about an individual who spoke about his project that would produce

electricity without heat.

Everyone had their own opinions about regulating citizen comments. Destadio said Holland had ideas, another Council Member said to leave it as it was, and he had made a suggestion that he shared with several of them. They had raised the time allotted to speakers from two minutes to three minutes and from 20 minutes total to 30 minutes. He proposed leaving 1206 the same, but adding that during the first three minutes of that person's time during public comments, they would be required to introduce the subject they wanted to speak on at length. For instance, they could say they wanted to talk at a future meeting about allowing people to camp at Drake Field, then go on and use their three minutes to talk about backyard hens. That would give Staff time to prepare, Destadio said. A Council member would still have to present the topic, he stated, and Council would have to vote at a later date on whether to allow it.

Learnard said he should present that request formally when they voted on 1206.

D. Citizen Committees

Holland said he knew the Assistant City Manager and the City Manager were putting together a few citizen committees, and he was excited about that because a lot of people had approached him saying they would like to get involved.

Executive Session

King moved to adjourn to executive session at 8:38 p.m. to discuss personnel. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

King moved to reconvene in regular session at 9:04 p.m. Destadio seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

There being no further business, King moved to adjourn the meeting. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.


Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary


Kim Learnard, Mayor