City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2012
7:00 p.m.

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Peachtree City met in regular session on Thursday, May 3, 2012. Mayor Haddix called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Other Council Members in attendance: George Dienhart, Vanessa Fleisch, Eric Imker, and Kim Learnard.

Minutes
Learnard moved to approve the April 19, 2012, regular meeting minutes as written. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda
1. Consider Ordinance Amendment – Sec. 42-83 – Residential Solid Waste Container
2. Consider Budget Amendments – FY 2012
Fleisch moved to approve Consent Agenda items 1 and 2. Learnard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Agenda Items
04-12-09 Consider Victory Motorcycle Purchase
Police Chief H.C. "Skip" Clark addressed Council, saying he hoped the presentation that would be given would answer the questions Council had at the last meeting regarding the motorcycle program and the Victory purchase.

Sergeant Brad Williams of the Community Response Team (CRT), supervisor for the motorcycle officer, Corporal Chris Hyatt, gave an overview of the benefits of having a motorcycle as part of the Police Department fleet. He continued that the motorcycle got 229% better actual gas mileage than the average patrol car, and the fuel costs were 78% less expensive than the cost for a Crown Victoria over five years. It had a faster response time to cart path locations than patrol cars or all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). The motorcycle had better maneuverability on the cart paths and through traffic, and it had proven effective at collision reduction at the top collision locations in the City. It was a great tool for community relations presentations, and there was no door or window between the officer and the citizens. Citizens were more at ease talking to the motorcycle officer at a stop light.

Williams continued that the motorcycle could park almost anywhere to address traffic concerns, especially on SR 54 West, and it had helped create a 98% seatbelt compliance rate versus the 93% rate for Georgia. It had proven to be effective in quickly locating suspects and missing persons on the cart paths since the program's inception.

Williams noted that the officer's schedule allowed him to work on Saturdays. His shift was from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. (nine-hour shift, Tuesday – Friday/Tuesday – Saturday) and covered the peak collision hours (lunch and evening rush hour) and afternoon school zones. The officer was on patrol 180 days in 2011, and 94% of those days, he was on the motorcycle.

Fuel efficiency was measured from February 2011 – February 2012. The Patrol Division's Crown Victorias averaged 9.8 miles per gallon (mpg), and the Community Response Team's (CRT) cars averaged 9.54 mpg, compared to the motorcycle's average of 32.21 mpg. The average Patrol car used 1,640 gallons of gas for 16,074 miles, while the motorcycle unit used 262 gallons for 8,438 miles. Williams said that, at $3.75 per gallon, the motorcycle saved $2,246 in fuel costs over the course of a year compared to a Crown Victoria driven 8,438 miles.

Williams noted that Motor Officer's first full month had been August 2010. He was primarily assigned to directed traffic enforcement in high collision and complaint areas as well as school zone enforcement, primarily enforcing violations that commonly contributed to collisions or violations that contributed to the severity of injuries from collisions. The officer had 219% more enforcement contacts than the average patrol officer and made 110% more school zone speeding enforcement contacts than the next closest officer (15 times more than the average officer). The motorcycle officer led the department in seatbelt enforcement in 2011, with 16% more contacts than the next closest officer. Since being assigned to the motorcycle position, the officer had increased his own performance and made 186% more enforcement contacts per year than he averaged prior to the assignment.

Williams said the motorcycle had a better response time for some incidents. It could utilize all parts of the path system or a combination of path and roads to respond to calls and go around congested areas, especially areas such as SR 54 West. It was multiple times faster than an ATV at responding to incidents on the cart paths. The motorcycle was quieter than an ATV on the paths, and it had a video camera.

Examples of the motor unit's effectiveness included locating a brush fire in the wooded area behind Panasonic, locating a missing seven-year old found in an inaccessible part of the cart path that could not be navigated by patrol cars, locating three masked subjects on a golf cart on the path around Lake Peachtree, locating a vulnerable adult missing from Ashley Glen, and locating a runaway juvenile, missing an entire night, on the path system.

Williams gave a five-year cost comparison between the Victory motorcycle, the Harley-Davidson motorcycle, and a Crown Victoria. The total cost for the Victory would be $22,790 [purchase/lease price of $33,000, plus basic maintenance of $1,000, less the resale value $11,210]. The total cost of a Harley would be $34,671 [purchase/lease price of $29,671, plus basic maintenance of $5,000 (must be serviced by dealership to maintain warranty coverage)]. The total cost of a Crown Victoria was $39,045 [purchase/lease price of $44,500, plus basic maintenance of $3,180, less resale value (fair condition) of $8,635]. Williams added the motorcycle would save over $24,000 in fuel over five years versus having the officer operating a traditional patrol vehicle. The total savings over five years was $40,255 for a Victory versus a Crown Victoria, including fuel.

Williams also noted that the Victory motorcycle was built specifically for law enforcement use. The Harley was modified for law enforcement.

Dienhart asked how many days a patrol car was on the road. Williams said about the same number of days. Dienhart asked if the car came off patrol with the officer. Williams said the department had a take-home program, so one officer was assigned to a specific car, which provided several benefits. The officers paid for the take-home privilege, which helped offset the cost of the miles travelled to and from home. Williams said it was not an uncommon practice, and it helped attract officers to work in the City. The training and vacation time was about the same for the motorcycle officer and those who drove patrol cars. Last year, the motorcycle officer could not ride for about 10 days due to inclement weather.

Dienhart asked if Hyatt had also evaluated the motorcycle. Hyatt said he had, along with other brands, and found the Victory to have the best options for what the City used a motorcycle to do.

Haddix opened the floor for comments from the public.

Nathan Esparza told Council he saw the motorcycle as a source of pride for the City. He guaranteed it slowed him down, and his children were always excited when they saw it. Peachtree City was a green city, and this looked like a fantastic way to save money. Per his calculations, the City would save $12.50 per day for the next five years.

Clark briefed Council on the Police Department vehicles and assignments. There were 88 vehicles assigned to the department. The Administrative Division had eight vehicles assigned for eight positions, with one open position. The Criminal Investigation Division (CID) had six vehicle assigned and six positions; one sergeant used a pool vehicle. The Patrol/CRT Division had 51 vehicles and 51 positions, with one position open. Code Enforcement had three vehicles assigned and three positions. The Department had 68 vehicles and 68 positions, which included three Code Enforcement officers and 65 sworn positions (two of which were currently vacant).

There were 20 unassigned vehicles, including four used by the 10 – 12 Auxiliary officers, one used by two Reserve officers, nine special purpose vehicles (three undercover, one transport van for prisoners, one truck, three ATV/Rhinos, and one golf cart), and six pool vehicles (one for CID, one for Code Enforcement, three for Patrol, and one K9) used by the four divisions as needed for maintenance. Clark added there was usually an average of two vehicles in Public Works for repair or maintenance.

Dienhart said he had a hard time paying the amount for basically half a year (180 days) for one person. If the officer got a job with another City, there would be no one to use it. There would be additional training costs to do the program right, and those were not included. It was not fair to compare a car to a motorcycle, and there should also be comparisons to the ATVs and bicycles. The numbers were somewhat skewed. He asked Clark if there was any mission that could not be completed without the motorcycle. Clark said nothing would be left undone. The question was how effective the job was done with the use of the motorcycle. Dienhart said the City had overspent, and he understood why. There were many things the City needed to spend money on. A motorcycle was "nice to have," but it was not a "need to have." The City should be focusing on the "must-haves."

Haddix asked where the officer would go if he was taken off the motorcycle. Clark said he was not sure, but he would have to get a car for him. The best use of the officer was a motorcycle, and staff would need to determine where the officer would be best used without it.

Imker thanked Fleisch for her decision at the last meeting to continue the discussion, as he might have made the wrong choice. He said he appreciated the data presented, and he could now see the value of the program and expansion of it in a few years. He suggested another officer be trained in the event Hyatt was out. Dienhart said it was still a poor spending choice.

Fleisch pointed out that it had been a pilot program with a lease, and no one had known how it would work. Now the training and policies and procedures could be developed. Clark said he had not wanted to spend the money on training until he knew the program would continue.

Haddix asked if it would be possible to exchange one of the cars that would be replaced next year with a motorcycle. Clark said he had discussed the possibility with City Manager Jim Pennington, and there were some ideas on taking a couple of the cars out of the fleet, but staff was not ready to bring those ideas to Council at this point.

Imker said he wanted to think long term in regards to the budget. It was clear the motorcycle met the long-term projection of saving the City money.

Dienhart asked how long the motorcycle would last on patrol. Clark said they were still researching. It was difficult to get the same type of empirical data that was available for cars. An evaluation would be needed at the end of the five years. The cars were replaced based on mileage, and they needed a good five years of data to determine whether to keep using the motorcycle. Dienhart said if the motorcycle was replaced more often than a car, then the savings was lost. Clark said when a car was traded in after eight or nine years, the City only was credited with $1,500 – $2,000 on a trade-in. There were other factors to be considered.

Fleisch moved to purchase of the brand name Victory Commander 1 police motorcycle from the sole source provider, Victory Police Motorcycles, for the purchase price of $31,941 after the termination of the lease of the Harley at the end of May 2012, with the source of funding coming from the Capital Equipment Lease. Learnard seconded. Motion carried 4-1 (Dienhart).

<u>New Agenda Items</u>

05-12-01 Presentation from Convention & Visitors Bureau

Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Chairman Kai Wolter gave a market/industry overview, noting that nationally hotel rates had begun to rebound, but rate erosion continued in the City due to the mix of business. Part was due to the some of the movies, which were low-rated, and the hotels were still discounting and hurting themselves. Corporate travel had not really rebounded in the City, as in other metro areas, and there was no new large corporate account in the market. The national forecast was for RevPar (revenue per available room) to grow by 5% to 8% in 2012. The City's RevPar was up 2.2% over the last 12 months.

Wolter continued that, based the running 12-month total from March 2011 to March 2012, the hotels in the City had 5,148 more occupied rooms over the past year. Room revenue increased by $328,769, and there was a tax surplus of $5,458, based on the CVB's projections for FY 2012. He reminded Council that the CVB was funded by the hotel/motel tax. The three-year average daily rate comparison had dropped from $98.48 in 2010, to $93.31 in 2011, and to $92.39 in 2012. The average RevPar had also dropped from 2006 to 2011 – $65.48 in 2006, $61.08 in 2007, $62.52 in 2008, $54.10 in 2009, $49.35 in 2010, and $53.36 in 2011. Wolter noted that the low rates in 2011 were largely due to the movie/television industry, but a rebound in the average daily rate was expected by 2013. Wolter noted the Hilton Garden Inn opened in 2010, and Dolce-Peachtree only had 85 available rooms from November 2008 – April 2009.

Nancy Price, CVB executive director, noted that the website, which launched in October 2010, had 2,572 unique visits in March 2012 compared to 920 in March 2011. The March statistics in FY 2011 had 2,752 unique visits compared to 13,242 unique visits in March FY 2012. They were improving with social media. Magazine leads were up as were welcome packets. The YouTube video had 13,672 views. Ongoing projects included the Visitors Center renovation, development of an Android CVB app, a mobile site, the purchase of a 14-passenger van to be used for film tours, support of local events, and the new online newsletter, ***Peachbits***.

Price continued the focus of sales efforts in the Social, Military, Educational, Religious, and Fraternal (SMERF) market was another project. The new marketing campaign was "Discover Life at 15 MPH." Price showed the short YouTube video.

Price introduced Mark Lively and Michael Richard of Compass Collective, who presented the plans for the expansion of the Visitors Center. Price reiterated that the funds for the expansion were from the hotel/motel tax. Lively said the inspiration for the design of the Visitors Center came from the passion of the residents for the City and its uniqueness.

Richard said the designers viewed the Visitors Center as a three-dimensional marketing piece and wanted to create a tour area as visitors entered. The center included a reception area, retail area, an office area, bathrooms, a large mural with graphics that could be changed, a map from Peachtree City Development Corp./Pathway Communities' original visitors center that had been updated, and a golf cart with a monitor on the front windshield that would play a loop video. There would also be a sitting area near the existing fireplace, and there would also be street signs that would make visitors feel as though they were walking through a Main Street area.

Haddix asked if the Visitors Center would incorporate some of the City's accolades such as being one of Rand McNally's top six Most Patriotic Cities. Price said the Visitors Center would incorporate memorabilia that had been collected.

05-12-02 Consider Approval of Budget Amendment for Renovations for New Visitors Center

Price asked Council to approve $68,000 for the renovation of the Visitors Center, adding the amount was surplus from the CVB's FY 2011 budget. Per the CVB's bylaws, any expenditures over $20,000 needed Council's approval. The funds for the renovation were approved by the CVB board at its meeting on April 18.

Fleisch moved to approve the CVB's budget amendment for $68,000 for renovations to establish the Visitors Center in the Amphitheater Box Office building in the area formerly known as The Gathering Place Annex. Learnard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

05-12-03 Consider Emergency Pipe Repair – Stormwater Utility Fund

Public Services Director Mark Caspar asked Council to fund the pipe repair for a pipe located off Windbreak Path. There had been several sinkholes in the area, and staff found the system was failing after the video inspection. Staff recommended using the same method used to repair the area across from City Hall and under Peachtree Parkway, which was the centrifugally-cast concrete method. It was structural in nature, approximately 7,000 pounds per square inch (psi) concrete with an expected life span of 50 years. It was more cost effective than having Public Works remove and replace the system via the open trench method. The recommended process only took three days to a week. Replacing the pipe via the traditional open trench way would take a minimum of one month. Staff requested Council approve $77,625 as a not-to-exceed amount and to authorize Utility Asset Management, Inc., to do the work. There were adequate funds available in the Renewal and Extension Line of the Stormwater Utility budget to cover the cost.

Learnard asked why a sole source vendor was being recommended. Caspar said Utility Asset Management was the only authorized company currently located in Georgia. Learnard asked whether, when looking at all the work that needed to be done, it would also be single-sourced. Caspar said the City could look outside the state because someone might be willing to travel due to the amount of work.

Learnard moved to approve an amount not to exceed $77,625 for emergency pipe lining through Utility Asset Management, Inc. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

05-12-04 Consider Elimination/Replacement of One Position in Administrative Services Division/City Manager Department

Human Resources Administrator Ellece Brown addressed Council, noting the City Manager had evaluated his needs and the role of his assistant, the executive assistant position in Administrative Services. The position had changed dramatically with the addition of supervisory responsibilities.

When positions were revised, they were sent to The Mercer Group for evaluation, and their recommendation had been to change the position from Salary Grade 275 to Salary Grade 277 with the title of Administrative Services Coordinator. Staff's recommendation was to eliminate the executive assistant position and replace it with a new position entitled Administrative Services Coordinator. The budget impact was approximately $3,800 annually.

Learnard moved to approve elimination/replacement of one position in Administrative Services Division as described. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

05-12-05 Consider Elimination of Customer Service Representative II Position & Replacement with Two Part-time Positions – Administrative Services

Brown noted the position was currently full-time, and staff recommended replacing the full-time position at the Front Desk area with two part-time positions, which would save the City approximately $19,400, including the benefit savings.

Learnard moved to approve the elimination of the Customer Service Representative II position and replace it with two part-time positions. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

05-12-06 Consider Elimination/Replacement of One Position in Police Department

Haddix clarified that the Major position was an agenda item. The proposal regarding the Captains' positions would be discussed under Council/Staff Topics. He would honor the requests for public comment at that time.

Brown said the Police Major had retired recently, and staff had reviewed and evaluated the job description, which had not been revised in 10 years. The position provided critical leadership and was second in command. Based on the current needs of the department, the title of "Major" was not representative of the person that would be the second in command. Staff recommended the position of Major be eliminated and replaced with the new position of Assistant Police Chief. The Mercer Group evaluated the new job description and title, recommending the position stay in the same salary grade (286) and the job title change. There was no budget impact as the salary grade remained the same.

Dienhart clarified that changes had been made to the job description, and staff knew what they were looking for. Brown said that was correct, adding that they had looked at the education, experience, and training required for the position. Dienhart asked if the assistant chief would be hired from within. Brown said current employees could bid on the position.

Learnard moved to approve the elimination/replacement of one position in the Police Department, that the Major position be replaced with an Assistant Police Chief. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

05-12-07 Consideration of Bid Approval for Refurbishment of BSC Irrigation Pump

Haddix noted there was an additional agenda item on the dais – the staff memo on the agenda item. Community Services Director Jon Rorie said the irrigation pump at the Baseball Soccer Complex (BSC) had fallen into disrepair, with constant problems. The plan had been to replace the whole pump, but after an assessment, staff found the pump could be refurbished for half the cost of a new one and with a 10 – 15-year life span. Due to the refurbishment, the project must be name brand and sole sourced. The pump was a Flowtronex Pump System brand, and Pro Pump & Controls, Inc. (regional Flowtronex provider for North and South Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia) was the sole source provider for Flowtronex pumps. The company had been working on the pump for years and had maintained all the data and service records. Staff recommended Council authorize the refurbishment of the pump, which had been identified as a project in the Facilities Authority bond.

Fleisch asked if there was any extra warranty on the pump with the refurbishment. Rorie said there was. Learnard asked how old the pump was. Rorie said he did not know, but his best guess was since the BSC was built. Some changes had been made. The line originally went into the bottom of the pond, and now it floated on top, which meant the pond did not have to be drained for maintenance.

Learnard moved to approve the refurbishment of the BSC pump for a figure not to exceed $60,000 from Pro Pump and Controls, Inc. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

05-12-08 Consider Recreation User Fees

Haddix noted there was an additional document on the dais – the staff memo regarding the agenda item. Rorie said staff had been looking at the fees for several months. New agreements were in place for the youth sports associations. Staff asked Council to approve the changes in the fees as outlined in the memo.

The proposed increase in programming fees was 10% to 20%, depending on the class. Some participants would only pay an additional $1 to $2.

The suggested rate increases for user/maintenance fees for sports associations would be effective immediately with the sports associations' upcoming registration periods. The proposed increases included the following:

- From $5 to $15 for Peachtree City residents, from $10 to $25 for Fayette County residents, and from $25 to $50 for out of county participants
- 80% of all fees would be used to offset maintenance costs
- 20% would be set aside as a Capital Reserve Fund for replacement of items.

In addition, Rorie recommended increasing rental rates a rounded 20% and implementing a tiered Special Event Permit fee effective FY 2013. Rorie said there were 34 special events held each year in the City. Staff spent a great deal of time on the events, and based on the resources provided by the City, the cost should be passed on to the users.

Fleisch asked how the timing of the increases would affect the associations. Rorie said the City's budget would go in place on October 1, but some of the associations had dual seasons, and they were getting ready for the fall season now. Fleisch said she wanted to ensure all the associations knew about the increases as they would go into effect immediately. Rorie assured Fleisch the associations were aware of the increases.

Fleisch move to adopt the recommended user fees as outlined in the staff memo. Imker seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

Hot Topics

Haddix pointed out that the memo from Pennington regarding proposed organizational changes was just a kick-off presentation for discussion. Any discussion would be held during the budget workshops and hearings.

Pennington said he wanted to give Council an overview of where the City was, where it had been, and where the City might want to go. There were several items in the memo. He addressed the changes made over the last year.

The second item in the memo was not for action, and it dealt with the Police Department. One of the issues was to establish the assistant chief's position. Another was to take a hard look at the organization, whether it had the right amount of people, or was top heavy or bottom heavy. Pennington said all of that was irrelevant at this point, and they had to start somewhere for discussion purposes.

The third part of the proposal dealt with City leave policies, which would require Council to authorize the City Attorney to begin preparation of the appropriate documents to effectuate changes of the existing leave policy, which was the major point in the document. There had been a situation for some time with how the time for exempt and non-exempt employees was counted. Pennington reiterated this was the only item he was asking Council to either discuss or authorize the City Attorney to get started on the preparation of necessary documents.

Haddix asked Council if there was any discussion. Learnard said, if the question was whether to proceed with what was written in the memo, her recommendation was to proceed as written.

Fleisch showed an analysis of the anticipated savings based on the proposed changes to the leave policies (a copy is included in the meeting file). The actual cost savings was difficult to calculate, but there were associated costs and savings associated with the proposed changes. The estimated annual soft savings was $117,854.36 and the estimated total annual dollar savings was $29,131.85.

Pennington said there was a question that permeated most organizations regarding overtime. Compensatory (comp) time and time-and-a-half should go to non-exempt employees. Exempt employees were salaried employees expected to work as long as it took to get the job done. Non-exempt employees were to be given comp time at time-and-a-half, which was time off that was to be directed by the manager or supervisor. The time could be paid at time-and-a-half at the occurrence. It had not become a major issue until a few years ago when the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) made it one. Per GASB, comp time either needed to be paid, which affected the budget, or booked, which affected the long-term budget. It had to be recorded one way or the other and was considered a liability, and the time should be used as soon as possible to clear it off the books. He recommended getting it off the books as soon as possible, either by paying the employee or the employee taking the time off. The Council consensus was for the City Attorney to proceed.

Pennington continued that the elimination of captains in the Police Department was a recommendation for discussion. The discussion would follow through the budget process. The issue needed to be discussed. Pennington said he would prefer the assistant chief be in place prior to making any changes as there might be another alternative. All cities had different organizational structures. He and Chief Clark had worked closely on the proposal.

Haddix said there had been some confusion, and people thought the changes would be implemented quickly. He opened the floor for public comment.

Captain Rosanna Dove addressed Council, thanking Haddix for the opportunity to speak. She said she understood the recommendation for the assistant chief position, but she had some questions. She asked that her 14th Amendment rights be granted and that she not be retaliated against for speaking out and asking questions.

Dove said the truth behind the alleged cost savings and what would be lost needed to be known. She asked what research had been conducted on the proposed changes. Based on her calculations using the median salary of current and proposed employees, the savings would be $6,627, which was quite different than the $400,000 quoted in the newspaper. The captains' equipment needs were far less than what was inferred. Until 2012, Dove said she drove a decommissioned Crown Victoria with 104,000 miles on it, and she now drove the Explorer with 72,000 miles on it that was used by former Chief Jim Murray and former Major Mike Dupree. Two of the captains drove decommissioned marked patrol vehicles with at least 110,000 miles, which had recently been traded out for cars with 70,000 miles.

Dove said the memo did not reference how to replace the 18 years of training, experience, knowledge, and networking that would be lost once the three captains were eliminated. Three of the four had a minimum of 18 years experience, asking how much it would cost to retrain others with the same certification and skills. Her policy writing abilities saved the City money and liability. The training and experience that would be lost included homicide investigation, emergency response, military police, management, budgeting, leadership, contacts, and networking. Dove noted that her position, Office of Professional Standards (OPS) commander, would be replaced by three people. Her responsibilities included accreditation, public information, and internal affairs. The department was also getting ready to go through its seventh accreditation. The first had been in 1992, and she had been the accreditation manager since 1999. The last two on-site inspections had been perfect. A mock on-site was scheduled in June, with a full on-site scheduled in August. Based on what she had read, the proposed phase-out would put the captains out by September 30. Dove continued that having an assistant chief was not a major hurdle, as Dupree had essentially held the position for nearly 16 years. If all the other restructuring was approved, there was no way the department would make it through the August on-site inspection.

Dove asked how adding the layer of the assistant chief position between the captain who would remain and Chief Clark would produce any direct command responsibility and support. Currently, the four captains reported directly to Clark, and there would now be a buffer between the chief and four people who did a great deal of work. In 2010, Dove noted Dupree was moved from what was essentially the assistant chief position to the OPS command position, which had been her position at the time. It was not clear why that had been done in 2010, but it was now an essential position. One of the captains currently handled many of the tasks the assistant chief would perform. Her position was targeted in the newspapers the day before, and per the story, she would be replaced by the OPS lieutenant. Dove said she respected the lieutenant, adding he was exceptional, but he did not have the same credentials she had nor the respect she had in the internal affairs and accreditation communities. He was trained and respected in the tactical and special weapons and tactics (SWAT) communities, which were field operations.

Dove referred to the Personnel Policy Manual, Policy VIII, which stated, "Vacancies in higher positions in the career service shall be filled as far as practicable by promotion from lower classes. To accomplish this purpose, the City Manager may direct that only qualified City Employees shall be considered for an existing vacancy. Such closed competition shall be allowed only when there is a sufficient number of qualified eligibles within the City service." Dove said on April 30 she asked Chief Clark if it would be an internal bid only for the assistant chief position or if it would be an internal and external process. Clark told her it would external, too. Dove said she asked why, and Clark told her because it was. She asked Council if the position would be open for internal and external applicants. If the position was open to external candidates, Dove asked why, since there were four captains and other department employees who were more than qualified for the position. She asked if the City was prepared to change the Personnel Policy Manual to meet the need of going outside the City for applicants.

Dove noted the City Manager's memo said the reorganization would reduce the number of administrative positions and reallocate them to field services. Dove said the proposed chart had one additional administrative position, two part-time court personnel, one additional person going to field services, and the elimination of four people with the abilities needed to ensure the department was successful. She asked Council to ask questions and look at the research. She knew the City was having tough financial times, and she and others could identify cost-saving measures if given the opportunity. They did not want to negatively affect the safety and quality of life for the City's residents and employees.

Lynn Bianco told Council they had to be careful when they started tinkering with public safety. The proposed change in the structure would not comply with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) guidelines regarding span of control, which was three to seven subordinates reporting to a supervisor, with five as the ideal. The recommendation for eight was outside the guidelines, which could cost federal funding.

Captain Mike Claman said he had worked in several areas of the Police Department during his 18 years. The proposed reorganization eliminated several key positions and created an assistant chief position. All of the captains were part of the budgeting process, organization, and daily operations. They brought their knowledge, job experience, and educational backgrounds, including master's degrees in public administration, to the department. They had assessed other departments and helped them develop policies and procedures, using their own department's as a guide. He continued that, according to the memorandum, there had been a year-long review of the Police Department, but no one on command staff had been given direction to look at ways to reorganize or recommend changes. In the past, the command staff had come together when tasked by Council to reduce or improve the budget and still maintain the focus on protecting the citizens. He also read that the elimination of the captains was recommended because lieutenants were the wave of the future. Only one of the six lieutenants had been with the City longer than any of the captains. He noted that the City departments had been asked to reduce costs and put off filling vacant positions. A new officer had recently been hired and another had received an offer, which meant money would be spent on uniforms, training, and equipment. He asked if anyone had noticed the department was short two officers. Elimination of experience and leadership was not the answer. Recent events included armed robberies, and he had been working that night. He was the commanding officer or investigation officer on the last several homicides in the City. Most of the crimes committed during his 18 years here had been solved by members of the City's department. Residents enjoyed a safe community. Although he lived in Coweta County, he wanted to come to a safe place to work, shop, and enjoy. Claman said he was not at the meeting to save his job; he had given 18 years of his life to ensure Peachtree City was a safe place.

Bob Vasquez told Council he was a retired police chief. He lived in the City because he felt safe. The second Council played with public safety they were playing with his life, and those of his wife, his children, and his mother. He would do anything it took to keep the Fire and Police Departments strong.

Fire Captain Ron Mundy said he had 30 years of employment with the City. The Police Department was phenomenal, and he had seen all the captains come through the ranks and the jobs they had done, adding Council should be proud of what they had done. He continued that Pennington had been brought in to evaluate the functionality of City staff and to make recommendations for effectiveness and efficiency. The City Manager had said earlier he had never seen a police department with the staff the City's had. Mundy agreed, saying it had won awards, and the employees were highly recognized in the police community and in the City. People either loved them or hated them, and the reason was because of the job they were doing. He understood the budget was tight, but this was not the answer.

Haddix closed public comment. He said he was far from taking a position on the proposed changes. He understood why the City Manager was making the recommendation that had been made; he understood the confusion in the community. He felt Council was no where close to making a recommendation or setting up a definitive time line. There were legal questions to be considered, and it was improper to pursue the changes until he had gotten the definitive answers he needed. He said there would be no retaliation.

Dienhart also assured the officers they would be treated fairly with no retaliation. Haddix added the City Manager and everyone should be treated fairly.

Learnard moved to convene in executive session at 9:14 p.m. for pending or threatened litigation. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Imker moved to reconvene in regular session at 9:29 p.m. Learnard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss, Imker moved to adjourn the meeting. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Pamela Dufresne

Pamela Dufresne, Deputy City Clerk

Don Haddix

Don Haddix, Mayor