City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 3, 2022
6:30 p.m.

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met in regular session on Thursday, March 3, 2022. Mayor Kim Learnard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Others attending: Gretchen Caola, Frank Destadio, Mike King, and Phil Prebor.

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognition
None

Public Comment
Suzanne Brown stated that the district lines for the State House of Representatives had been redrawn due to population changes, and Peachtree City's districts had been affected. The primary elections were in May, and she urged residents to become familiar with the candidates before it was time to vote. The southeastern part of the city would be moving from District 72 to District 74, while District 72 would add voters from other parts of the city and become District 73. District 68 would get the far northeast corner of Peachtree City, and it included areas of south Fulton County. Updated information was available through the Georgia Secretary of State's website.

Keith Larson said the City and Southern Conservation Trust (SCT) formalized the creation of the Flat Creek Nature Area with a lease in 1997 with no requirement for the City to reimburse the Trust for any services provided. Now, SCT had announced it was ending the lease due to an impasse on reimbursement from the City. The Trust's initial stewardship of 513 acres had increased over the years to 623 acres without financial compensation.

In 1992, the Comprehensive Plan established the objective of developing a nature area and boardwalk trail in the Flat Creek wetlands. The SCT was organized in 1993 to operate the Flat Creek Nature Area and provide education programs. The Trust obtained funding from Fayette County as a condition of its permission to build Lake Horton. The SCT had worked to meet the Comprehensive Plan's goals by providing services the City could not provide in 1992, nor today, Larson continued. The Trust could no longer balance revenues and expenses and could no longer provide services to the City for free. Green spaces were top priorities for residents, and he urged Council not to be penny wise and pound foolish and come to an acceptable agreement with SCT.

Agenda Changes
None

Minutes
King moved to approve the February 17, 2022 Council Meeting and Executive Session minutes. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda
1. FY-22 Budget Amendment- Donation for Father/ Daughter Dance
2. FY-22 Budget Amendment – Convention and Visitors Bureau
3. L.O.S.T. 2023 Certificates of Distribution
4. Motor Grader Replacement and LeeBoy Brand Name Approval
5. Storage Replacement (Production and Backup)
Destadio moved to approve Consent Agenda items 1-5. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Agenda items
None

New Agenda items
03-22-01 Master Lease Agreement- Capital Equipment (Salvatore)
Financial Services Director Paul Salvatore explained this master lease agreement was essentially a revolving line of credit for capital equipment purchases that provided a low, tax-exempt interest rate for governments. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) required the lease agreement be renewed every few years. The City would make annual draws from the funds every year, based on the five-year capital improvement plan (CIP). The terms on those loans were for five years, which meant that one dropped off and one was added every year. That allowed them to spread out the costs of these purchases and also minimized the legal fees of borrowing.

Raymond James and Associates, the City's financial advisors, sent out proposals to 17 banks that did this type of agreement, and three responded. Banc of America Public Capital Corporation, the institution the current master lease agreement was with, submitted the most favorable proposal. The interest rate was based on an indexed formula, and, if they did a draw today, the interest rate would be 1.53%. When closing costs were factored in, that interest rate went to 1.69%. It would probably be different when they did their first drawdown, which would cover this fiscal year. The agreement would run through fiscal year 2025, so it was for four years, Salvatore noted. The first drawdown was anticipated for September and would be about $2.7 million.

He showed the list of the equipment purchases for the next four years in the CIP. Some of the public safety equipment would come off if it was listed as a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) project on the upcoming ballot. They would not be obligated to purchase those items through the lease agreement but could still maintain the total amount and draw from it if the money was needed.

The closing was scheduled for Thursday, March 17, and Salvatore said there was a resolution in the meeting packet. If they adopted it, it would allow them to sign all necessary documents.

Prebor moved to approve the authorizing resolution to accept the proposal from Banc of America Public Capital Corp for the four-year master lease agreement for capital equipment financing. Destadio seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

03-22-02 Reclassify Purchasing Agent Position to Purchasing Manager within the Finance Department
Director of Human Resources and Risk Management Ellece Brown said the recent compensation study done by Management Advisory Group gave them the opportunity to re-evaluate the purchasing function and how those responsibilities were divided. They found that the Financial Services Director was performing several of those duties, and it became clear that the better title for the position would be Purchasing Manager rather than Purchasing Agent because the Agent title was too broad for the responsibilities.

In 2020, Brown explained, they went through a reduction in force and a reclassification of positions, and the Purchasing Agent position was changed from full-time, 40 hours a week, to a modified full-time, 30 hours a week position. During the 18 months that had been in place, they had determined that the reduced schedule had not been efficient for the department. It was needed full-time.

If approved, this position would have additional responsibilities, such as the lease finance processes and support of the accounts payable function. Brown said Council had been provided with a job description for the Purchasing Manager. Even though the Manager position would be one salary grade lower, there would be an additional cost of $14,282 due to the increase in hours. That would be funded through administrative contingency funds.

Caola asked if this position was already filled? Brown said it was: they were just taking it from part-time to full-time.

Destadio moved to approve New Agenda item 03-22-02, Reclassify Purchasing Agent Position to Purchasing Manager within the Finance Department. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

03-22-03 New Alcohol License – Super Chix – 401 City Circle #1640

City Clerk Yasmin Julio said the applicant, Missy Moon, was opening a new restaurant at 401 City Circle, Suite 1640. The applicant and the business location met all requirements of the alcohol ordinance. She said the standards of the City Council in deciding whether to deny or grant a license should include whether, in the best judgment of Council, the applicant, based on all the information obtained in the application process, possessed the quality of sound judgment and discretion necessary for one who dispensed alcohol beverages in the public generally. All applicants meeting the ascertained standards of this chapter would be granted a license, or licenses, requested upon hearing. The Council, in applying the facts of the licensing criteria, would act in a judicial capacity. If the application was denied, the reasons should be stated in writing and entered into the minutes, Julio stated.

The Mayor opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak in favor or in opposition, and the Mayor closed the public hearing.

King confirmed that a background check was done.

Prebor recalled that alcohol license approvals used to be on the Consent Agenda and wondered what had changed. Julio said the State required a public hearing.

Destadio asked if the applicant was related to Police Chief Janet Moon? and the Chief said she was not.

King moved to approve the item 03-22-03 New Alcohol License, Super Chix, 401 City Circle #1640. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

03-22-04 New Alcohol License – The Walnut Tavern – 361 Hwy 74 N

The applicant, Mathew McKinney, was formerly the license holder for Revolution at the same location, 361 Highway 74 North, Julio stated. This was a new restaurant and a new business model. The applicant and the business location met the ordinance requirements and should be granted a license, she noted.

The Mayor opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak in favor or in opposition, and the Mayor closed the public hearing.

Prebor moved to approve item 03-22-04, New Alcohol License, The Walnut Tavern, 361 Hwy 74 North. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

03-22-05 Sign Ordinance Update
Planning and Development Director Robin Cailloux said the sign ordinance was last revised in 2011. There was a Supreme Court decision in 2015 that had some impact on signage in general. Because of these events and some ongoing litigation, it was a good time to update and revamp the sign ordinance.

The City hired an attorney who was an expert in sign regulations. She recommended Council issue a moratorium on new sign permits, which they did on January 20, 2022. That would expire the following day, Cailloux noted. The City Attorney and the sign attorney drafted the ordinance and worked with staff to review and refine it. There was a public workshop at the Planning Commission meeting on February 14, and this was the public hearing.

Cailloux said she wanted to be clear that there were no changes proposed to the number or size of permitted signs or to the design requirements. This was just a revision to get a legally sound ordinance.

Major changes included incorporation of the least restrictive means test, which was done through a minor edit to the text that had no impact on how staff actually applied the ordinance. The update removed the statement that prohibited all signs not specifically given permission. Also, the 2015 Court decision said they could not create a class of signage based on content. Previously, the ordinance allowed non-commercial messages more rights than commercial messages. They had deleted all that language and were treating all signs the same.

Minor changes included updates that staff brought up, such as allowing digital signage to indicate fuel prices at gas stations. The ordinance currently called for replaceable numbers, but those were no longer manufactured. Digital menu boards at drive-thrus would be permitted. They were also codifying some established practices, such as the high school graduation banners that were placed every spring at the entrances to many subdivisions. Those were being made very explicitly a permitted right, Cailloux said. Signs required by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and State-required signs would be codified, as well.

The Mayor opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak in favor. In opposition, Michael Secor asked if the ordinance would affect individual neighborhood requirements? He said his neighborhood prohibited commercial signs in yards and restricted the size of other signs.

Cailloux told him this would have no effect on homeowners association (HOA) regulations.

No one else wished to speak, and Learnard closed the public hearing.

King said he believed they had enough information, and Destadio remarked they had all had a chance to meet with Cailloux and go over the changes.

Destadio moved to approve item 03-22-05, Sign Ordinance Update. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics
City Manager Jon Rorie related that he left his fire service career behind about 10 years ago and came to Peachtree City with the idea that he could develop professionally and, in the long run, compete for a city manager's job somewhere. He planned on staying for five years, but here he was today in the 11th year of that five-year plan. Rorie said it had been one challenge and opportunity

after another, and he had served with wonderful people, some now retired or deceased, who had contributed to his growth, both professionally and personally.

He said it was difficult to leave after just over a decade, but he believed they all—current and past staff and Council, as well as citizens—had worked as partners to leave the city better than they found it. It was a difficult decision, he said, but he would be retiring from Peachtree City on April 29. Coming to Peachtree City, Rorie stated, was one of the best decisions he had made in his career, and it had truly been his pleasure. He still enjoyed getting up every day and trying to make a difference and hoped he would continue doing that. Rorie said he wanted to sincerely say "thank you."

With that, King commented, they had a significant pair of shoes to fill. He said he was grateful to Rorie not only professionally, but as a friend as well. They had been through some tough times and some great times. Rorie was responsible for so many projects, such as the MacDuff Parkway bridge, the dam, Drake Field, the 2017 SPLOST referendum, the success of which he attributed to Rorie. He hated to see him leave, although they had known about his intended departure for about a year.

King charged Rorie with getting the human resources office ramped up to find a replacement. It would not be easy, and it might be the middle of July before Rorie was replaced, King estimated. He noted that Brown would be spearheading the search, and Council would make the selection.

For the interim manager, Prebor said, they had talked about hiring someone who did not want the job permanently. Maybe it could be a retired city manager from somewhere. King said that would be part of Brown's task, and he agreed it should be a retired person who did not want the job. There were a few names that had come up, some local, some not. Destadio said the company they had been talking about could provide names of people who might serve on a temporary basis. King said that would also have to come before Council.

Learnard noted they still had two more months but told Rorie they wished him and his family well. Destadio congratulated him on his retirement, even though he would not officially be retiring.

King moved to adjourn to executive session at 7:05 p.m. to discuss personnel. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Destadio moved to reconvene in regular session at 8:04 p.m. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Martha Barksdale

Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary

K. Learnard

Kim Learnard, Mayor