City Council of Peachtree City
Minutes of Meeting
February 5, 2009
7:00 p.m.

The City Council of Peachtree City met Thursday, February 5, 2009, in the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Logsdon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Council Members present: Steve Boone, Don Haddix, Cyndi Plunkett, and Doug Sturbaum.

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognitions
Mayor Logsdon recognized Nikki Vrana of Administrative Services as the 2008 Employee of the Year. City Planner David Rast was recognized as the 2008 Supervisor of the Year. Matt Robinson and Tony Whitley of the IT Department were recognized for receiving the 2008 Create Award from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) for the City's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) interactive web map. Whitley gave an overview of the map (a copy of Whitley's PowerPoint is included in the official meeting file).

Public Comment
There was no Public Comment.

Agenda Changes
Plunkett moved to move New Agenda Items 02-09-02 and 02-09-03 to immediately follow the Consent Agenda. Boone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes
Boone moved to approve the January 15, 2009, regular meeting minutes and the January 20, 2009, special called meeting minutes as written. Haddix seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports
Logsdon noted there were additional documents on the dais – the Planning Commission attendance roster and the list of donations. Logsdon pointed out that City employees spent 1,389 hours picking up garbage that residents threw out on streets in FY 2008, which was a waste of hours and tax dollars.

Consent Agenda
1. **Consider Grant for CERT**
2. **Consider Request to Surplus Goods**

Plunkett moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Sturbaum seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

02-08-02 Discuss FY 2009/2020 Budget Adjustments
City Manager Bernard McMullen said staff still recommended the cuts in grass-cutting, right-of-way cutting, and landscaping crews in Public Works and Recreation. The discussion and recommendation at the January 15 meeting was to look at everything, and that was still a work in progress. His presentation went over the information in the meeting packet for this meeting, as well as some items that were added since that time. (A copy of McMullen's PowerPoint is included in the official meeting file.) McMullen went over the City's five-year financial projections, noting that there would be a $1.5 million deficit in FY 2009. In 2010, to get close to

an even budget, staff proposed a 1.5 mill increase in the millage rate (5.533 mills to 7.017 mills), but Council felt that would be difficult with the economy and the downturn in the revenue. McMullen felt they should plan now for what would happen in 2010. In December 2008, approximately $1.5 million was cut from the FY 2009 budget and a reduction in the 2010 Public Improvement Program (PIP) was made, which helped the FY 2009. Now, staff projected a need for the use of $389,000 of the fund balance for FY 2009. If the millage rate was not increased, there would be a $3.5 million hurdle to overcome in 2010. McMullen felt that the projections were optimistic, adding the City had not met the adjusted target for this year's Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) collections yet. The built-in adjustment in the budget for job vacancies was also an issue. He explained that normally there was a 2.5% adjustment for job vacancies, but people were not leaving, so that number would have to be decreased. An increase in the City's defined benefit pension plan would also be needed due to the stock market, but was not reflected in the budget.

McMullen went over the results of the employee survey, noting that 266 (82.1%) of the 324 City employees returned the survey. Twenty-eight employees (10.53%) said they would be willing to accept a 25% reduction in pay, and 238 (89.47%) said they would not. There was no response from 58 employees (17.9%), most of whom were part-time employees who did not work that week.

McMullen continued with the recommendations to meet the $3.5 million challenge, which included proceeding with outsourcing the Public Works and Recreation crews – $840,000 annual savings; eliminating paid leave benefits for regular part-time employees and birthday, holiday, and safety hours for part-time firefighters – $45,000 annual savings; reducing staffing levels in Developmental Services/Building Department – annual savings to be determined (McMullen went over the building statistics, which showed the workload had decreased); eliminating 2010 Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) and performance raises – $700,000 annual savings; reimbursement for use of take home vehicles outside City limits by Public Safety personnel – $25,800 annual savings; alternating operations or closing Clover Reach and Pebblepocket pools starting in 2009 – $57,000 annual savings (USA Pools would like to use the pools for lessons and would pay most of the costs; staff was waiting for a written proposal); and exploring outsourcing operations of Kedron Fieldhouse and Aquatic Center – annual savings to be determined.

McMullen proposed that the City send out a Request for Information (RFI) to see if there were any people or businesses were qualified to run Kedron Fieldhouse and Aquatic Center and to see if outsourcing the facility was worth proposing. As for the rumors that services at Kedron would significantly change, McMullen said one of the groups interested wanted to add services. The City would not afford to overlook anything. Once the RFIs came back, McMullen would bring the concept of operations to Council, then move forward with Council's decision.

McMullen continued that were many rumors about the Kedron bubble, and he presented the facts regarding the cost. The bubble allowed the swimming pools to be operational during the winter months, October through March. The cost for the crew to install and take it down was $21,455. The operation cost, including utilities, lifeguards, chemicals, and repairs, was $179,990. The total operation cost for the bubble at Kedron was $201,445. Replacement of the 13-year old bubble was pending at an estimated cost of $235,000, which would be amortized at $54,270 for five years. The estimated lifespan of the bubble had been five years.

The Aquatic Center received $39,352 in revenue in 2008. The users and their share of paid revenue included high school swim teams (158 users), $1,422; Southern Crescent Aquatic Team (SCAT) (125 users), $3,750; Masters (an organized swim program for adults) (22 users), $660; classes, $2,659; open swim fees, $11,091; winter pool passes, $6,960; lessons, etc., $11,250; and birthday parties, $1,560. The operating deficit for the bubble was -$162,093. The operating deficit with a replacement bubble (amortized at $54,279 annually) would be -$216,372.

If the teams and Masters swimmers paid an equitable rate for the time they used the facility, and the cost of pool passes were doubled, the revenue for the bubble would increase to $97,021. The breakdown would include high school swim teams ($112/swimmer per season), $19,824; SCAT ($186/swimmer per season), $23,250; Masters ($108/swimmer per season), $2,376; classes, $2,659; open swim fees, $22,182; winter pool passes, $13,920; lessons, $11,250; and birthday parties, $1,560. With $97,021 in revenue, the operating deficit would be $104,424. The operating deficit with the replacement bubble would be $158,703.

In addition, McMullen recommended increasing the employee health care contribution (currently $20/month for employees and $50/month for families) for an annual savings of $120,000 and consolidating Recreation and Public Works maintenance under Public Works at an annual savings to be determined. He also recommended that Council consider a millage rate increase in 2010 to bring ongoing revenue inline with outgoing expenses.

McMullen said the financial problems needed to be solved with long-term changes, not short-term changes. The City had approved long-term expense increases over the last several years, but had not approved millage rate increases. He would have to ask Council for a millage rate increase for FY 2010.

McMullen gave a brief overview of how the City compared to other Class B cities on millage rates, adding that millage rates were difficult to compare. East Point had the highest rate at 12.163 mills. The lowest was Lawrenceville with 2.310 mills. The City was in the middle of the 13 cities with its 5.533 mills. Peachtree City was the only one of the cities that had a library, fire department, and an ambulance service. Nine of the cities operated utilities and were able to transfer some of that revenue to their general fund.

McMullen reported that 1,301 Citizen Surveys had been returned as of February 3. Question 16 on the survey asked residents how they felt about cutting services versus increasing taxes. He added that 1,182 residents had answered the question, and 119 had skipped the question. Of those who responded, 25.5% (302) felt that services should be cut to avoid a tax increase, 23.4% (276) checked taxes should be increased to retain services, and 51.1% (604) felt some services should be cut to reduce the tax increase.

Question 17 asked residents to rank what departments/services Council should consider for cuts. The areas were marked from 1-11, with 1 the first area to be reviewed for cuts and 11 the last area. The rankings, service, and response average included the following:

Ranking	Service	Response Average
1	Recreation classes (dance, exercise, etc.)	4.03
2	Subdivision entrance landscape maintenance	5.22

3	Special events (Shakerag, July 4th, etc.)	5.24
4	Frederick Brown, Jr. Amphitheater	5.28
5	Kedron Fieldhouse & Multipurpose/Skate rink	5.40
6	Path system extension	5.81
7	Gathering Place (senior citizen activity center)	6.10
8	Public swimming pools (Kedron & others)	6.37
9	Right-of-way maintenance (mowing along streets)	6.93
10	Sports fields (soccer, baseball, softball, football, etc.)	7.11
11	Peachtree City Library	8.56

Regarding the rankings, McMullen noted that the City really broke even on the recreation classes since it received 20% of the fees charged by the instructors. The level of service was going to change for the subdivision entrance landscape maintenance because the current level of service cost too much money. As for the special events, the City did not have information on how the people attending those events affected other areas, such as the impact on local businesses and sales tax. Staff would also be looking at getting revenue and costs closer together at Kedron Fieldhouse & Aquatic Center.

Additional recommendations included restructuring the cardboard recycling program managed by the City for an annual savings of $24,000 and continuing to look at all areas of service delivery. McMullen added that Keep Peachtree City Beautiful Director Al Yougel was working with a vendor about taking all of the City's recyclables at no cost and sharing the revenue when the industry rebounded. McMullen added that staff was not finished making cuts and would look at all areas. Logsdon said he was convinced staff was looking at the budget top to bottom. He asked that any comments wait until Jeanie Etheridge had finished her presentation.

02-09-03 Request from Jeanie Etheridge to Address Council Concerning Budget
(A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is included in the official meeting file.) Etheridge introduced Darlene Gulli, who assisted with the presentation. She said their intent was to keep the City the City of Excellence it was known to be and to remind everyone that the employees had helped the City become what it was. Etheridge said they had a lot of questions and would like to hear answers.

Etheridge referred to the fund balance, noting that the City's policy was to maintain a 20% operating reserve of the "Total Uses of Funds" amount appropriated in the general fund budget. Every year, the City budgeted $10 million in reserve. The problem was that the current government had taken from the reserve to balance the budget for the past two years. Gulli added that $852,536 was taken from the reserve in FY 2008, and $1,146,962 was taken from the reserve in FY 2009, for a total of $1,999,498, a majority of the $3.5 million deficit in the FY 2010 budget.

Etheridge referred to several statements in the FY 2009 budget message from McMullen, and noted the statement, "use of fund balance is a one-time revenue source." She asked why a one-time use had been used for the previous two years creating a large portion of the deficit seen now.

Etheridge referred to another statement, "Projected maintenance and operation millage rate increases of 1.5 mills, .523 mills and .3 mills for fiscal years 2010 through 2012." She noted there had been no millage rate increase for five years and asked why the City continued to spend more money when the revenue sources had not increased. She said the presentation on the cost to run Kedron Fieldhouse & Aquatic Center should be duplicated for the Frederick Brown, Jr., Amphitheater and the Tennis Center. She asked how something could be considered an asset if it did not support itself.

The next statement Etheridge addressed was the following – "Staff will work diligently towards eliminating the need for these anticipated future rate increases, as we have done in the past, while still maintaining adequate cash reserves and service levels." She reiterated that $1,999,498 had been appropriated from the cash reserve over the past two budget years and that the definition of "appropriated" was to take exclusive possession of. Etheridge asked what cash reserves had been maintained and how would the service levels that this City was known for be maintained by terminating positions and using outside vendors.

Etheridge referred to the following statement – "FY2009 appropriations for diesel and gasoline increased by $86,902 over FY 2008." She noted that driving City vehicles between work and home increased fuel consumption. The City policy was that the City Manager could give permission for employees to take home city vehicles. Etheridge asked how much taxpayer money would be wasted before he rescinded this privilege. She asked if there was a way to extend the time of service for Public Safety vehicles. Gulli asked why officers could not share cars to save money.

Etheridge said that time constraints prevented a complete list of budget issues. They had just hit the high points of their concerns. She was sure others had issues.

Etheridge continued with a list of questions about the $3.5 million FY 2010 budget deficit. The questions included the following:

- Why terminate the employees in 2009?
- Why are the Council Members and Mayor doubling their income?
- Why are we buying five more police cars? Are they really needed?
- How is the purchase of an SUV for the Police Department going to improve protection?
- What renovations does City Hall need that will cost $47,500?
- Why spend $60,000 on fireworks?
- How much will the vendors be paid to cut grass and landscape?
- Why can't the cost of the fireworks be shared by more than just this City's budget? (clubs, organizations, the County)
- What awards will be given the City when the employees that make it great are gone?
- Burden for the deficit should not be carried by the taxpayers only, will the Council and Mayor act responsibly and give up their raises?
- Is it true that $350,000 of Recreation's budget went to the Police Department?
- Why can we not make our budget work when nearby cities have remained in the black financially?

Etheridge read the following portion of the City's mission statement:

- Ensure residents a safe and healthy environment in which to live, work, and enjoy leisure time.
- Provide consistency in the delivery of the municipal services in a fiscally responsible way.
- Respond, in a courteous, timely, and effective manner, to the expressed needs, concerns, and expectations of our residents.
- Provide a sense of community through family oriented activities and citizen involvement

Etheridge said the City had learned that, in cases of outsourcing, the consistency in service delivery had already begun to erode. She said the City should not stay with the mission statement if consistency was not maintained. The employees kept it consistent. It had not yet been explained how outsourcing would be timely and effective, when the contractors used subcontractors. The residents wanted to keep their expectations high. They came to the City for the amenities, and they would stay because of the amenities. The residents' interest in the reduction in the workforce was an example of citizen involvement. People were paying attention.

Gulli said the City Manager and Council should be held accountable for the budget and any shortfalls due to insufficient management of funds and taxpayers' money. Therefore, no employees should be laid-off and no reductions in services should be passed on to the citizens. Residents were also accountable. The City would not know what residents wanted if no one told them. No employees should be laid, and there should be no reduction in services. There had to be a way to make it happen.

Logsdon said Council and staff had a copy of the presentation and would address the questions that were asked.

Those who spoke included Steve Beyer, Lynda Wojcik, Richard Michael, Mary Cartwright, Deb Presley, Tim Lydell, Steve Gulas, Rob Copeland, Lola Williams, Joy Flowers, Kathy Smith, and Shona Schmidt. Their concerns included:

- Builders who spoke were concerned about the proposed job cuts in the Building Department and the effect it could have on the industry.
- The City's Building Department was very good to work with and turned things around in a timely manner. The proposed job cuts would hurt that ability.
- Building permits were job generators.
- Outsourcing services and lowering the City's standards were not the answer.
- The City's share from the recreation classes should be increased.
- Cutting the number of building inspectors could create problems in getting remodeling/building jobs done.
- Recreation facilities were not intended to be money makers and needed to be subsidized.
- Swim meets would help bring tourism.
- Recreation facilities added to the value of homes in the City.
- More residents should have attended the workshops and public hearings on the budget.

- Outsourcing plan review and inspections could create other issues.
- The human aspect of the Kedron bubble and use of the pool in the winter was important.
- Kedron users were willing to pay more to ensure swimming was available to all ages and available year-round.
- Shakerag Arts & Crafts Show brought in nearly 200 vendors last year who stayed in hotels and ate in the restaurants, as well as the people who visited the show.
- The therapeutic swim classes available at Kedron were important, and it would be difficult for many to travel to classes in other locations.
- There was a suggestion to build a glass structure for the Kedron pool, which should save about 30% on utilities.
- There were human factors to consider, as well as financial factors.
- There was untapped potential to use Kedron for conferences, competitions, and training camps.
- If there were no bubble at Kedron or no Tennis Center, residents would be forced to go to other cities for recreation. There were residents who would pay more.

Logsdon told those who spoke that Council shared their concerns and assured them that no one department would suffer the burden of all the cuts.

McMullen asked for guidance. Boone asked if there was anything the City could do to take over any utilities. McMullen said that he had researched water and gas when he first became City Manager. A city could not get into the utility business now. The only utility the City could get into was cable, but the City would have to back a $20 million bond and need to secure 50% to 60% coverage of the City to make it profitable. Staff felt it was very risky to do that. The City would be in a similar situation if it took over the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) infrastructure, since WASA owned it.

McMullen noted that staff was continuing to look at ways to save money. Leisure Services Director Randy Gaddo was working with some of the athletic associations, who had asked about putting a proposal together for taking care of the fields. Staff was looking at any issues that could arise from working with non-profit organizations.

Plunkett said she agreed with the comments that recreation services were not moneymakers. Quality of life was the reason people lived in the City, and that was why they paid 5.533 mills in taxes. The top three things that contributed to the quality of life were the library, Police Department, and Kedron. If they started chipping away at the quality of life, it was slippery slope from which the City would never recover. She would not support cutting any quality of life issues or public safety. Things could be done better and more efficiently.

Haddix said that something had to be done at Kedron. The City was spending $936,000 every year, and $701,000 was coming from the taxpayers. He agreed it was an asset, but 75% of the expenses were on the City. Logsdon agreed. Haddix said there were many people in the City who did not use the recreation amenities, and Council represented the entire City.

Logsdon said the goal was to cut expenses and keep services. He pointed out that the residents also need to pay attention to the state legislature. Cities were under attack at the state level. There were a half dozen bills that attacked the cities and counties. Sturbaum agreed.

Old Agenda Items

12-08-12 Consider Signing DOT Signal Application for Line Creek Signal

City Engineer Dave Borkowski gave an overview of what had happened with the signal application. He said that staff still recommended the Mayor sign the application, which would be forwarded to the Department of Transportation (DOT) office in Thomaston. It still had to go to the Atlanta office for final approval.

Boone moved to approve the DOT signal application for the Line Creek signal. Plunkett seconded the motion with the following conditions – that Council require as part of the permit application that DOT synchronize the lights up SR 54; all expenses including any costs incurred by the City's Engineering Department be borne by the developer; the traffic light continued to be part of the site-specific Special Use Permit Council previously granted; and the final condition was that, as part of that letter and application, the City request that a loop be installed for traffic coming out of Planterra Way and turning right of oncoming traffic. Plunkett said that the last condition was not a condition of the light, but she wanted to ask for it at the same time. Boone accepted the conditions. The motion carried 3-2 (Haddix, Sturbaum).

01-09-06 Consider Traffic Ordinance Amendment – Parking Restrictions on Clover Reach

Borkowski said the proposed amendment would restrict parking on the south side of Clover Reach behind the Sleep Inn. (A copy of Borkowski's PowerPoint is included in the official meeting file.) He continued that the Park Place owners wrote a letter to the City in December 2008, requesting that the City look at a parking prohibition on Clover Reach because of hazardous conditions. The Park Place owners had cited that tractor-trailer trucks obstructed the view of their shopping center. Staff had looked at the sight distance to see if it was appropriate between the curb cuts. Based on the information staff collected, there was no real space to provide significant parking on the street based on its current configuration. Staff wrote a letter to the Park Place owners advising them that parking should be totally prohibited on the street and to address questions about signage. There had also been an ongoing conversation with the Police Department to reduce the speed limit on Clover Reach to 25 miles per hour, which would reduce the required sight distance and allow more parking on the street, and the Police Department had no problem with that. Reducing the speed limit opened up approximately 85 feet for parking in front of the Sleep Inn, which was enough space to fit a fully-loaded tractor-trailer or enough space for four cars. Staff had contacted the owners of the Sleep Inn and Waffle House. Sleep Inn did not have any concerns about the parking. Waffle House was concerned, especially since full access at the street's intersection with SR 74 had been limited due to the road widening, and had asked staff to maximize parking for the trucks. The proposed ordinance limited the parking on Clover Reach.

Sturbaum moved to approve the traffic ordinance amendment for parking restrictions on Clover Reach as presented by staff. Haddix seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

New Agenda Item

02-09-02 Presentation by Peachtree City Tourism Association

Peachtree City Tourism Association (PCTA) Executive Director Lauren Yawn updated Council on the PCTA activities. She noted that the PCTA's mission statement was to attract, stimulate, and develop growth in the tourism industry; to serve as the marketing arm of the City of Peachtree City; and to represent the City as a tiered unit utilizing the Tennis Center as a tourism draw. The purpose of the PCTA was to market the City and all of its assets as a destination for the business and leisure traveler; to develop the educational, cultural and economic potential of the City; to use tourism to create economic development and generate revenue in the local economy; and to use the local lodging tax revenue to promote tourism, conventions and trade shows within the City. The overall purpose was to promote the welfare of the public, stimulate commerce, and otherwise serve the public interest of the City.

Yawn noted the PCTA's recent successes, including sports tournaments (since November 2008-2,300 rooms – multiple night stays, outstanding bids not included); Georgia Dream Pass; 2009 Tourism Ambassador Program; named to "Top 10 Best Places to Retire;" recognized in the state's movie, film and television division (*Super Nanny*, *CBS Block Party*); and 1-877-PTC-GA50.

Efforts to market the City included brochures, meeting planner, trade shows, working with other departments/organizations within the community, packages (concert packages etc.), formulating databases (convention, conferences, sports etc.), website/web leads, familiarization trips, travel writers, working with local hotels to get competitive hotel rates in bidding process, advertising in travel publications, and running the state-recognized Welcome Center.

Yawn continued that external partnerships included the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDECD), Georgia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus (GACVB), International Association of CVBs (IACVB), International Association of Festivals and Events, and the Atlanta Metro Travel Association (AMTA). Internal/community partners included the City's Recreation Department, the Fayette County Development Authority, the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, the Peachtree City Airport Authority, and the Great Georgia Airshow.

Yawn noted that the main travel to the City was business-related. The hotels were filled Monday through Thursday. The PCTA worked to fill the hotels the other days with leisure travel. She pointed out that a 7.8 percent drop in revenue per average room rate (RevPAR) was forecasted for 2009, which was the fifth largest annual decline in the measure since 1930. A hospitality industry forecaster predicted that the nation's hotels would not experience a year-over-year quarterly increase in RevPAR until the second quarter of 2010. The City had six hotels, 744 rooms, the average occupancy was 55%, and the average rate was $112. The PCTA projected a 20% shortfall in the hotel/motel tax and was working on a contingency plan for the budget.

Yawn said research was key to the PCTA's success. They were working to identify the diversity of the visitor mix, including government, industry, military, university, medical, leisure, sports, group, wedding/reunion, meetings, and pass-through, to see where the PCTA's money was best spent.

The plans for 2009 were to re-focus the PCTA efforts on that of a CVB; to educate local the community on tourism; to research current market projections and future marketing opportunities; to market the City using print, online, and live media; to generate and aggressively solicit business – what business and revenue could be brought to the City today; to execute a balanced budget; to comply with the PCTA's mission; and "Put Heads in Beds!"

02-09-04 Consider Ordinance Amendment – Commission/Authority/Association Attendance & Alternate Appointments

Acting Administrative Services Director Nikki Vrana said the proposed amendments were housekeeping changes. One change addressed the verbiage, including the word "association" in the ordinance. The make-up of selection committees was also addressed by adding the chair of the commission/authority/ association to the committee. The meat of the changes dealt with filling unexpired terms and attendance criteria.

Plunkett asked the other members if they had read the proposed changes and liked them. They said they had. Plunkett moved to approve the ordinance amendment for the commission/authority/association attendance and alternate appointments. Boone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

02-09-05 Consider Ordinance Amendment – Alcohol Licenses

McMullen requested Council table this agenda item, adding that staff had received some information from the state that impacted the number of special events permits issued by the City. Staff needed to look at another way.

Sturbaum moved to table the ordinance amendment for alcohol licenses until a date determined by staff. Haddix seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

02-09-06 Consider GDOT MOU for SR 74 South Landscape Enhancements (Phase 1)

Plunkett noted this agenda item referenced covering the sound walls on SR 74 South and moved to approve the GDOT MOU for SR 74 South landscaping enhancements (Phase 1). Sturbaum seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

02-09-07 Consider Modifications to Non-Profit Funding Policy

Sturbaum moved to approve the modifications to the non-profit funding policy. Haddix seconded.

Logsdon asked why the wording, "sudden and urgent need," had been added. He said that could be done without adding the wording to the policy. Plunkett recalled that there had been a request from Fayette Senior Services last year, and there had not been enough specific language in the policy.

The motion carried unanimously.

02-09-08 Consider Funding and Design of Cart Path, MacDuff Path Tunnel to Highway 54 West Commercial Area

Borkowski addressed Council, pointing out that the City had received many requests from Cedarcroft for an alternate route to the Wal-mart/Home Depot area. Staff was asking for guidance whether or not to proceed with design of a cart path to the tunnel under MacDuff Parkway. Currently, people using the path system to get to the commercial area used paths in Cedarcroft. The other option was to block off the Cedarcroft paths, which would require golf carts to travel the path that paralleled MacDuff Parkway. Council had indicated they would consider removing the Cedarcroft paths if Ravin Homes would construct the path connection needed for the tunnel. The estimated cost of the design was $14,000. Borkowski said there were some logistical issues with the proposed route, such as how to route the path around the detention pond, as well as challenges with the slope. Staff recommended the funding for the design be taken from Council Contingency.

Logsdon said he met with Mike Rossetti of Ravin Homes, the Cedarcroft developer, and had visited the subdivision to look at the areas involved. There were challenges to building a cart path. Rossetti told Logsdon that he would build the cart path, depending on the cost, if the City did the engineering and design. Rossetti had also asked that he be allowed to work with the engineers who would do the design.

Plunkett asked how long the design would be good. She did not want to spend the money in vain if Rossetti decided he could not pay for the construction. Borkowski said the design could sit on the shelf for a long time, but could need some tweaking if there were any changes in the wetlands regulations. Plunkett asked if there was an estimate on the construction cost. Borkowski said it would cost at least $150,000. Plunkett said she was sympathetic with Rossetti about closing the two paths that were very close to the adjacent homes, but she was not in favor of closing the path in Cedarcroft that connected to Wal-mart. The path to the tunnel would be an alternate route.

Rossetti said that $150,000 was a pretty high, and he would not pay it unless all the paths in Cedarcroft were closed. Plunkett said that would not happen. Rossetti said he would not consider it in that case.

Logsdon asked the Cedarcroft residents if they were interested in closing the path that directly connected to the commercial area. Cedarcroft resident Dan Marsden said the residents' ultimate goal had been to close all the paths in the subdivision. He had looked at the plans, photographed the tunnel, and was in the process of getting all the plats. He was only missing the plat for Camden Apartments. He said there was a way to get out of the tunnel without going through the wetlands. While Marsden did not personally have a problem with the path that went directly to Wal-mart, other residents wanted them all closed.

Rossetti said that the path up to Wal-mart had turned into a freeway. The paths through Cedarcroft were designed to be neighborhood paths and had become system paths. The carts would not go all the way up to SR 54 if they could go through Cedarcroft. Plunkett said closing the paths through Cedarcroft would be opening a Pandora's Box. There were other areas in the City that had similar problems. She agreed that the paths in Cedarcroft were too close to the houses. Logsdon noted that the houses adjacent to the path that went directly to Wal-mart were as close as the other two in the subdivision. Logsdon asked Rossetti why his decision to pay the construction cost was contingent on closing all the paths. Rossetti said that, as the City evolved, the paths in the neighborhood connected to the system paths, and that was not what had happened in Cedarcroft. It was the same as a city street that became a thoroughfare as the city grew. Plunkett said signage would help guide people along the alternate route to Wal-mart.

Haddix asked Rossetti if he would repay the City the $14,000 if he did not pay the construction costs. Rossetti said the City would have to eventually finish the path in the area anyway. Haddix said he wanted more than a "maybe." Logsdon said the City had the opportunity for the developer to build the path if the cost was reasonable. He did not see that as a gamble. Logsdon said having a developer work with the engineer could help keep the construction costs down. Rossetti said he knew how much it would cost to just put down asphalt, but the City had new construction requirements for the paths. Boone said there had been problems with the paths, which was why they had been torn up and a base had been built. Rossetti said he knew that, but a bridge over the wetlands was a different story. Boone said he was talking about the new standards. McMullen said the cost of completing the path would be driven by compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, which had not been done with the original paths. McMullen said no one was going to put pressure on the engineer to not comply with the regulations. Logsdon told Rossetti he appreciated his willingness to look at the problem, but Rossetti needed to back away from closing the path to Wal-mart. Rossetti said the City needed to stop the other carts from using the paths in Cedarcroft. Plunkett said the City could not stop them all, but signage would help, especially with people unfamiliar with the area.

Lynda Wojcik told Rossetti there was a problem with wanting to close the paths in Cedarcroft, adding that the developer should have known how to build the paths. She added that there were always people getting lost in her area that were looking for Kroger.

Brian Dingivan was concerned about golf carts crossing MacDuff Parkway and the main thoroughfare into Wal-mart and Home Depot because it was not set up or safe for golf carts.

Marsden said that the maintenance guarantee on the plans said that City was responsible for the various infrastructure after two years. Logsdon said the design of the paths was poor. There were problems. The problem needed to be fixed, and the City was obligated to do that. Plunkett said the City was not obligated to fix the paths, but the City would maintain the paths that were there. Logsdon said Council was obligated to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens, and there were people having their homes damaged. There was a solution. Plunkett said she was happy to spend money on the design, but the City was not obligated to fix the problem. The people who bought the houses saw the paths. The people driving on the cart paths should be following the rules and regulations.

Tim West, who lived next to the path that went directly to Wal-mart, said there were easily 600-700 carts per day on the path in the summer. The golf cart traffic lasted until 2 a.m., and there was no traffic like that any other neighborhood located adjacent to a commercial area. He said there must be a solution. Boone reiterated it was Rossetti's responsibility to fix the paths causing the problem. West said things were better when the path between the houses under construction was closed. He noted there was no cart path on Huddleston Road, yet there were golf carts on it everyday. Plunkett said she empathized with West, but said it was not the taxpayers' problem, and she would not support anything that cost the taxpayers. Haddix added that the master plan for the path system included adding a cart path on Huddleston Road. He said there had to be cart path access to Cedarcroft. It could not be isolated. Haddix said his problem was that the developer wanted the City to do the design, then he would think about whether he would build the connection.

Sturbaum asked Rossetti what his financial threshold was for the path construction. Rossetti said $20,000 to $30,000, if it was asphalt. Borkowski said there could be a big issue if the cart path had to span the wetlands and the grade change of the slope from the tunnel.

Logsdon asked staff and Rossetti to look at the area and come up with an estimate. He did not want to spend $14,000 on a design if the path would not get built. McMullen said that could be done, and they would ask someone from Integrated Science & Engineering to go as well.

Sturbaum moved to table 02-09-08 Consider Funding and Design of Cart Path, MacDuff Path Tunnel to Highway 54 West Commercial Area in order for the builder to meet with the Engineering staff to come with a workable plan. Haddix seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

Overview of City's Wellness Program

McMullen noted that insurance was one of the larger items in the budget in terms of personnel cost, and staff was trying to reduce the funding spent on the item. Staff had been working with the City's insurance consultants and brokers to develop a wellness program,

Vrana introduced the City's wellness program, Plan to Stay Well, which would kick-off on February 12. UnitedHealthcare had provided information showing that for every 100 employees, there were 62 who did not exercise, 60 who were overweight or obese, 49 who drank regularly, 21 who smoked, and 21 who had arthritis. A lot of those issues could be helped by changing behavior. She noted that individual employees were the best hope of improving quality and cost efficiency. Factors that affected health were principally behavioral; 50-85% of all the diseases were associated with behavior. She continued that for every dollar invested, the anticipated savings was $3.48 for medical costs and $5.82 in absenteeism. Helping individuals become aware of their modifiable health risks and engaged in their personal health was the best way to affect change. The City's insurance carrier, UnitedHealthcare, was one of the first carriers to offer employers with 100 or more employees a comprehensive wellness program that included biometric screenings, incentives, and online and telephone-based wellness coaching. Employer benefits included lower absenteeism, higher productivity, improved employee morale, potential for lower Workers Compensation costs, and reduced medical claims over time. There were 248 employees in the insurance program, and 105 had signed up for the assessment on February 12. Participation in the wellness program would be encouraged, but not required.

Plunkett asked if there were incentives for belonging to a gym. Vrana said there were internal things that would be done. Staff was compiling a list of the fitness facilities in the City limits, and a letter would be sent to them informing them of the wellness program. If the facilities wanted to offer a discount to City employees, that would be great.

Plunkett said there were traffic issues in the mornings at Peachtree City Elementary School with the access road to get to Riley Field and the school. Parents used the road to drop off children at the school. The runners were coming through the area without acknowledging or heeding the direction from the volunteer/teacher directing the cars at the school. Plunkett suggested a stop sign be put up. The runners were whipping through the area, cutting around the carpool line, and causing problems. McMullen said he would speak with the principal. Borkowski said staff could authorize a stop sign in the area.

Plunkett asked about the speed limit on SR 74 South, which was 45 miles per hour (mph). Borkowski reported that the Thomaston office of DOT said the speed limit was based on a speed study. Boone noted that, prior to the widening the speed limit had been 50 mph to Crosstown Road and 55 mph from Crosstown to SR 85.

Plunkett said she was getting complaints about unlicensed drivers and golf carts. She asked if there was any way to find out about the licenses and whether the people were legal residents. Meeker said there were requirements in the ordinances. Plunkett said there was a lot of concern in the west side of the City. She had seen approximately seven men on one golf cart that did not have a registration decal.

Council Members discussed concerns about information on online forums and in ***The Citizen*** newspaper. These items were challenged via discussion and debate.

Plunkett moved to convene in executive session for threatened or pending litigation and personnel at 10:15 p.m. Sturbaum seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Boone moved to reconvene in regular session at 10:20 p.m. Sturbaum seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss, Sturbaum moved to adjourn. Boone seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Pamela Dufresne

Pamela Dufresne, Deputy City Clerk

Harold K Logsdon

Harold K. Logsdon, Mayor