

City Council of Peachtree City
Minutes of Meeting
February 1, 2001
7:00 p.m.

The City Council of Peachtree City met in a regular session, Thursday, February 1, 2001, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Robert L. Lenox led those attending in the pledge of allegiance. Other Council members present were: Carol Fritz, Bob Brooks, Dan Tennant and Annie McMenamin.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, AWARDS, SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Mayor Lenox and Police Chief Jim Murray presented Commendation of Honor Awards to Police Corporal Vicki Roman and Richard Scott, citizen, for rescuing a woman from a burning building.

MINUTES

McMenamin made a motion to approve the January 18, 2001, minutes as submitted. Brooks seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA – approved 5-0

1. Consider Bids – Computer Equipment – Police Station
2. Consider Bids – Telephone System – Police Station
3. Consider Bids – Landscaping & Irrigation – Police Station
4. Alcohol License Transfer – Creekside Chevron (fka Mini Mart)

Lenox made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Fritz seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW AGENDA ITEMS

02-01-01 Discussion of Planterra Tennis Center Phase III

Tate Godfrey, Development Authority member, addressed Council to advise them of the status of activity at the Tennis Center. He said the current facility was valued at \$2 million. He said the center served over 2,000 people each year. He credited the facility manager, Virgil Christian, and his 31 employees for much of the Tennis Center's success. He described an expansion plan for the center that would cost approximately \$2.4 million. The expansion called for covered tennis courts to bring the total number of courts up to 25, a two-story

9,500 square foot administration building, and a parking lot expansion with landscape improvements. He said the existing building would be used as an organized youth center.

He said much of the Development Authority's funding came from hotel/motel tax. He estimated that the Tennis Center was responsible for 600 room nights in local hotels in the year 2000. He estimated that the center had more than \$4 million impact on the local economy.

He felt that the expansion would increase the center's activities and bring larger tournaments to Peachtree City. He felt that the additional activity would bring approximately 1,800 room nights into Peachtree City each year with an economic impact of \$10 million.

He said Council had decided to reduce the Development Authority's funding to \$175,000 a year by gradually reducing the amount of hotel/motel tax distributed. He said if the funding were reduced they would not be able to meet their financial obligations. He explained that the Development Authority was responsible for the operation of the Tennis Center and the Amphitheater and they had started out with a \$200,000 cash reserve fund. He said both facilities operated on a break-even basis. He said the net profit from last year came to \$587. He said last year the Development Authority spend \$177,080 to operate the two facilities and only \$21,000 on economic development. He said the \$177,080 operation cost did not take into account their loan payments for capital improvements and expansions that have taken place. He said the City has always provided funding to the Development Authority for the operation of the two facilities because both facilities provided recreation programs for the community. He said if their funding were reduced they would be forced to reduce the quality of programs they could provide.

Godfrey said their current debt payments totaled \$85,000 a year. The new expansion would bring the debt payment up to \$250,00 a year for 15 years. He asked that Council consider raising hotel/motel taxes from 3% to 5% as allowed by law and to provide 3% (or \$550,000 per year) of that tax to the Development Authority. He felt that over time the Development Authority would be able to reduce its reliance on the City's funding, but they needed assistance to complete the development and help the Tennis Center reach its full potential.

McMenamin asked if the Development Authority had been in contact with the residents of Planterra Ridge to advise them of their expansion plans. Godfrey said they had. A citizen from the audience said they were very pleased with the

— communication that had taken place.

Brooks said he was aware that some residents had concerns about ensuring adequate buffering was provided for the parking lot.

McMenamin believed the City had a very low hotel/motel tax rate. Tennant agreed. He said he traveled extensively and that hotel/motel taxes were usually much higher. He also supported the tax increase because people traveling to Peachtree City would be responsible for paying the tax and that it should not affect the local residents.

Brooks agreed. He said people in Peachtree City loved the outdoors and recreation activities. He said they expected a high level of service and that the City should continue to consider unconventional methods of generating revenue to provide those services. He felt Godfrey's presentation was humble and that they had a world-class facility that had put Peachtree City on the map. He said he knew people who actually moved to Peachtree City because of the Tennis Center. He supported the tax increase and expansion plans. He said it would not be subsidized by the taxpayers but would provide additional benefits.

— Lenox felt that the Tennis Center and the Amphitheater were both set up to run like a business except for the fact that they did not have a goal to make a profit. He said they were public facilities and the fee structure should be such that the services were assessable to the public. There was no action taken.

02-01-02 Charter Revision

— Rick Lindsey, City Attorney, reviewed the draft revisions to the Charter. Fritz said she had asked what the process would be to make the changes, but that she never received a clear answer. Lindsey said that the proposed section of the Charter concerning the City Manager's position would probably need to go through the General Assembly. He said a resolution to add that section would need to be presented in the next three weeks if the change were to occur this year, but that he was waiting on someone from the Office of Legislative Council to confirm the procedure. He felt the rest of the changes to the Charter could be made locally after properly advertising and holding two public hearings. After reviewing the proposed changes and receiving direction from Council for further revisions, Lindsey asked that he be given the opportunity to make the revisions and present them to Council at the meeting on March 1st, for final discussion prior to holding the public hearings. Lenox made a motion to take a brief recess. McMenamin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

02-01-03 Pay Plan Appeal – City Clerk

Lenox opened the floor for Council discussion of the City Clerk's pay plan appeal. Fritz said she and Lenox had met one time and reviewed the issues and did not come to a conclusion; however, she said Lenox did agree to approve one of the factors and then later changed his mind. She said since then, everything was put on hold and the appeal was not going anywhere. She said that since Lenox had made his decision not support the appeal, she would like input from the rest of Council.

Lenox said had spent many hours studying the issue, the factors and the entire system. He said an internal appeal had changed the rating from 2120 to 2605, and that Faulkner had appealed three specific factors from that 2605 rating. Lenox said he went back and reviewed all of the ratings and said that he felt it should be rated slightly lower than 2605. He said the City spent a lot of money to hire competent professionals and he was pleased with their performance. He also felt City staff had been doing a remarkable job because no employee has ever filed an appeal such as this. He said all of the other appeals were adjudicated without complete agreement but with understanding that overall the city had done a fair job. He did not want to imply that he was dissatisfied with Faulkner's job performance, because she was going a good job, but he was concerned about the structure and nature of the job.

Tennant clarified for the public that this was not being discussed in Executive Session because it was not really a personnel matter, but rather a discussion about the function of the position. He said it had nothing to do with the person in the position, but what the actual job was worth.

Fritz said that after their meeting, Faulkner had sent an e-mail that the Council may want to consider. Brooks said they received a copy, but he felt compelled to accept the expert advice of the consultant. He said the position was initially rated lower because the consultants did not receive adequate information, but after it was provided to them, they took it into consideration and reclassified the position. He felt that it was Council's job only to make sure the consultant received all of the information, and they did. But, he felt Council was now being asked to evaluate different opinions about that information. He also noted that the salary range for the City Clerk's position was increased by 23% and felt Council should defer to the expert's judgment.

McMenamin agreed with Brooks. She said the study was done and it resulted in

— a significant increase in pay for the position. She said they were not talking about job performance. She noted that the salary range for City Clerks varied throughout the state, and felt that all of that was taken into consideration.

Brooks said the City Clerk compared her position to that of City Planner, but he felt that since Peachtree City was a planned community, the City Planner's position was somewhat atypical and did not reflect the same position on other communities. In fact, he felt that four to five years in the future, the salary range for the City Planner would be out of range. Fritz said Faulkner had done a lot of research on the issue. She asked how the position of City Planner compared to other cities? Lenox said it was a different structure.

— Tennant said he had given the issue much thought and had done much soul searching because he wanted to do what was fair and reasonable. He said it was incumbent on each of them to eliminate any thinking about the individual in place or her personality. He believed there was a genuine disagreement on the value on the position. He believed that the nature of the job was sensitive and the demands were significant. He also felt that the time requirement to perform in an effective manner was substantial. Therefore, he supported the appeal and the higher ranking.

Brooks asked if Tennant thought that undermined the integrity of process. Tennant said it did not undermine the process, but did call the consultant's judgment into question. He said it was not a black and white decision for him, but he felt the consultant was not perfect, there was some subjectivity involved. He did feel that a 22.8% increase in pay was substantial, but he felt there was some gray area involved in the classification of the position. He felt if they made a mistake, it should be to pay more for the position to make certain the City had the highest qualified candidate in the position.

Fritz felt there are some factors that should be awarded and that the position should be rated somewhere in between.

— For the benefit of the public, Faulkner pointed out that Council had failed to mention she had made the statement several times that she did not file the appeal to increase her salary. She said she had no problem leaving her salary where it was, but that she was really appealing the factors and rating of the position, because she wanted it to be placed properly within the City's structure. She felt the pay plan had been used as a method to demote her position.

Lenox said his decision had had nothing to do with performance or personality,

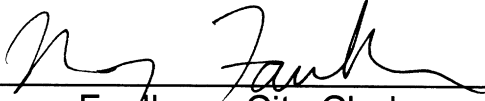
— but to follow the rules they established. He said the process worked exceptionally well for 220 employees and very few employees had problems with the process.

Brooks said they were all struggling with the decision. He said he was not an expert, but they hired experts. He was concerned about the reaction of other employees if the structure was undermined.

Lenox made a motion that the City Clerk's pay plan appeal be denied. McMenamin seconded the motion. Motion carried with Fritz and Tennant opposing.

COUNCIL/STAFF TOPICS

Lenox made a motion to adjourn. Tennant seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously and meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

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Nancy Faulkner, City Clerk