

City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 20, 2022
6:30 p.m.

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met in regular session on Thursday, January 20, 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

2022 State of the City Address

I'm Kim Learnard and I've been Mayor for two weeks.

I ran for Mayor because I'm passionate about preserving our Peachtree City quality of life. The five of us on Council have been busy meeting, getting to know each other, and making plans. It's important to remember we have a weak Mayor form of government, which means it is this body of five that makes the decisions. This is a knowledgeable, highly qualified Council and we are already collaborating on our priorities for this year and beyond.

*This is not my first term on Council, it is my third. I served as a PTC Council Member for eight years, from 2010-2017, before I term-limited out at that time. Starting in 2010, I worked hard to **balance our City budget** following the Great Recession. My fellow Council members and I scrutinized every line of every department, made cuts, froze hiring, raised the millage rate, and, later, restructured or paid off every one of our debt instruments. That paved the way for today's reasonable millage rate, 49 percent reserves, and zero debt. We are in a strong budget position.*

Our most valuable city asset is our employees, and this evening Council will be considering a new, comprehensive pay and benefit structure that brings Peachtree City into a strong competitive position among Georgia peer cities. With this proposal we have the opportunity to standardize our job classifications, increase minimum and maximum pay ranges to industry norms, and provide internal equity and external competitiveness. We intend to stay competitive in our pay and benefits. In my first few weeks as Mayor, my number one priority is to reach out to meet with the people and organizations that keep Peachtree City safe, healthy, green, productive, educated, and prosperous. I have enjoyed orientation with the CM and all department heads. I have met with my fellow Fayette County Mayors, each of our County Commissioners, school leaders, the Chamber, the Rotary Club, and the SCT. I have our Development Authority and GDOT on the calendar. I intend to forge positive, mutual relationships that work for all of us communitywide.

By March I plan to host a municipal summit in Peachtree City, and welcome elected officials and City Managers from all five Fayette cities, as well as our near neighbors to the west, Newnan, Sharpsburg and Senoia. I don't think this has been done before, but we all have a lot in common and have a lot to learn from one another. To share just one example, Newnan sustained a devastating tornado that tore through their historic district in March. Their storm disaster recovery was exemplary, and they have agreed to lead a brief discussion about storm disaster recovery. Fayetteville can speak to how they created a new City Center; other communities may focus on paths and trails; and every community has something to share.

But at the end of the day, it's all about the citizens. My philosophy is I cannot represent citizens if I don't hear from you, so with that in mind I've scheduled two Town Hall meetings to get us started.

The first Town Hall will be this Saturday, January 22, on the topic of City Communications. Now that we no longer receive a local newspaper on our driveways, we need understand how our citizens get information on what's going on in Peachtree City and whether we can improve. We'll be discussing the City website, social media, blogs, and other avenues. So join us from 9-11am in City Hall. My second Town Hall will be on the topic of Recreation. On Saturday, Feb. 5 we will be discussing the state of our Recreational facilities and services as they reflect Peachtree City on a local, regional and national stage. It will be important to get people talking, and I look forward to a productive sharing of ideas and suggestions on everything from parks to pickleball, disk golf to the Peachtree City Athletic Complex, Kedron Fieldhouse and Aquatic Center, and everything in between. It is possible we will decide, as a result of these conversations that it's time to create a new Recreation Master Plan, as the last one was dated 2011.

In addition to improving communications and putting fresh eyes on our recreational facilities, we have a lot of work ahead of us in City Planning. This year we will be discussing a short-term rental ordinance, potentially a noise ordinance, and updating our Unified Development Ordinances. In 2022 we're due to complete our five-year Comprehensive Plan update. Council has already appointed our citizens Steering Committee and they are ready to get started; we will be soliciting public input on a number of fronts so watch for news and information and PARTICIPATE. The kickoff will be a workshop on Tuesday evening, February 1st at 6:30pm, open to the public.

The second half of that Feb. 1 workshop will be on the topic of the 2022 SPLOST. We have a current SPLOST, the one penny extra in sales tax that goes to fund local projects. The current SPLOST is a 6-year SPLOST that began the summer of 2017 and ends at the end of June, 2023. Therefore, the County has indicated there will be a SPLOST proposal on the ballot this November for a back-to-back SPLOST. That means cities and the County will be creating a new SPLOST projects list. Once again, our City Council has appointed a steering committee and their kickoff will be the Feb. 1 Workshop.

I want to talk a bit about a SPLOST. A SPLOST effort is citizen-driven. It is a transparent process; the list of projects is voter-approved. Out of 159 Georgia Counties, I believe 152 of them have a SPLOST. SPLOST monies come in part from people outside Fayette who come here to shop and dine. Which means we are paying into the SPLOST in other counties, when we shop or dine in Coweta, Henry, Fulton and others. And if we don't have a SPLOST, we're paying into theirs, but they are not paying into ours. The current SPLOST has funded the golf cart bridge over the Peachtree City spillway, allowed us to update Glenloch Pool and build a new Splash Pad, install restrooms at Line Creek Nature Center, create the seven-acre Spyglass Island Park and bridge, purchase 268 radios for Public Safety that are compliant with the County's upgraded 911 system, buy one replacement Fire Ladder Engine, replace one Ambulance, we added more golf cart paths and connections, and much more.

This year, based on Council input and citizen input that I received so far, Council will also be discussing and prioritizing safety on our paths, restoring some of our library hours, understanding what we want in terms of connectivity with our neighbors, more uses for the Fred, and the possibility of a Parks Commission, just to name a few.

My priorities as Mayor will center around Three "R's" - roads, redevelopment, and recreation.

Roads – Traffic solutions are a top priority! I expect Peachtree City to continue to cultivate positive working relationships with Fayette, Coweta, and Tyrone officials, and together we will work with GDOT to address the increasing congestion on Highway 54. In the meantime, we are referring to the POND Traffic Study and I foresee we will continue to implement improvements.

Redevelopment – Peachtree City is about built out! But there are some areas of the city that could be

much better utilized. Kmart and Huddleston Road come to mind. If Peachtree City is going to remain a leading city with a robust tax base and a bustling local economy, we need to introduce some new, dynamic options, attract young families, and create nightlife – quality of life for all of us! I look forward to finding ways to tie in the anticipated sewer plans for Huddleston Road with ideas for a food truck park, boutique retail, restaurants, brew pubs and community gathering spaces.

Recreation – I will renew our resolve to protect our beautiful greenspaces and look for opportunities to partner with the Southern Conservation Trust to not only protect our nature areas, but conserve land wherever possible. We must take the necessary steps to assure safety and usability for all, on our paths. And I support investing to maintain quality parks, paths, trails, and sports facilities. Peachtree City's amenities are what make us a standout.

In the next four years, you can trust that this Administration will be forward thinking in our governance, focusing on rebuilding unity, fostering cooperation, and preserving the unique character and traditions of our community.

I'm excited, Peachtree City, about all that lies ahead.

Public Comment

None

Agenda Changes

None

Minutes

King moved to approve the January 6, 2022, regular meeting and executive session minutes. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Quarterly Reports

No comments

Consent Agenda

1. CJCC Use of Force De-escalation Grant and FY2022 Budget Amendment

2. Budget Amendments- Fiscal Year 2021

3. Emergency Replacement - Bridlepath Lane Culvert and FY2022 Budget Amendment

Destadio moved to approve Consent Agenda items 1-3. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Agenda items

12-21-05 Compensation/Classification/Benefits Study Evaluation and Analysis

Learnard recalled that Council was treated to a thorough presentation at the December 16, 2021, meeting, but she asked if they needed to review the presentation or if they had questions for Director of Human Resources and Risk Management Ellece Brown?

Destadio said he had a few comments, noting that he read through the information package and watched video of the presentation and was impressed. He noted that the last time they conducted a pay and market analysis was in 2014 and said he was impressed that they surveyed 16 different communities, providing a thorough review of all the surrounding areas. They also conducted a benefit market analysis in addition to the compensation market analysis, and Destadio noted that benefits were often as important as salary when considering a job. The report stated that a compensation

package greater than 30% was considered high; Peachtree City's compensation package was 34%. That was another benefit for potential employees to consider.

The modified plan proposed by staff did not make any changes at all from the proposal by Management Advisory Group (MAG), Destadio stated. No salaries had been decreased, but the modified plan lowered the cost to the City.

For all those reasons, Destadio concluded, he thought it was well-prepared. The original plan from MAG was done very well, and the modified plan did not lose anything; it just lowered the cost.

Prebor wanted clarification on the statement that the modified plan did not change anything from MAG's proposal. City Manager Jon Rorie said he believed Destadio was referring to the fact that there were no changes to the health benefits, and Destadio said that was correct, adding that no one would lose wages or benefits.

Prebor noted that MAG's plan would cost \$1,058,000, while the modified plan would cost about \$650,000, although everyone would still get their raises it called for. Destadio said they were saying the same thing.

Destadio moved to approve Old Agenda item 12-21-05, Compensation/Classification/Benefits Study Evaluation and Analysis. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

New Agenda items

01-22-05 Appointment of Fayette County Library Board Member – Denise Stripling

Library Administrator Jill Prouty explained that the previous appointee, David Hill, had to resign with one year remaining in his four-year term. Prouty commented that they might ask why did they need someone on the Fayette County Library Board? Fayette County taxes helped support the County library in Fayetteville. Also, Peachtree City's membership in the Flint River Library System was dependent on Fayette County. That membership gave them access to the PINES Library system, which consisted of more than 300 libraries statewide. It also gave the Peachtree City Library access to State and Federal funding; last year, they received more than \$100,000 in grant money. Membership on the Library Board was crucial.

She was nominating Dr. Denise Stripling, a rheumatologist and lifelong reader who had lived in Peachtree City two and a half years. Prouty thanked her for stepping up when they needed somebody. She would also be a voice in regional governance. The Fayette County Library Board appointed one of its members to serve on the regional board in Griffin. This was a critical position, and Prouty said she looked forward to working with Stripling.

The Mayor also thanked Stripling for serving.

Caola moved to approve New Agenda item 01-22-05, appointment of Fayette County Library Board Member – Denise Stripling. Prebor seconded.

Destadio asked how many members were on the County Library Board? There was one from Peachtree City, one from Tyrone, one from Fayetteville, and two at-large, for five total, Prouty replied.

Motion carried unanimously.

01-22-06 Sign Moratorium Ordinance

City Attorney Ted Meeker said before them was an ordinance imposing a 45-day moratorium on the sign ordinance prior to adopting a new sign ordinance. Moratoria were typically used to provide a break point between an old and a new ordinance.

Destadio moved to approve New Agenda item 01-22-06, Sign Moratorium Ordinance. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

All Children's Playground construction progress update

Director of Recreation and Special Events Quinn Bledsoe said she had been working on this project for quite a while, and it was nice to see ground broken and know that things were happening. She showed an aerial photo of the old playground with the footprint of where the new playground would be right beside it. It would be larger than the old playground, she noted. How much? Destadio asked, and Bledsoe said about 800 to 1,000 square feet.

The project began by gathering a citizen advisory committee to brainstorm on what was needed. This involved a lot of homework, including trips to other cities to see what they had done. They spent a significant amount of time in Griffin, getting advice from the Public Services Director there, who was a well-respected person in the Georgia Recreation Department Association.

Relocating would provide more shade from the trees; the current playground was in the sun all day long. They also would have additional shade equipment.

This week, Bledsoe went on, grading had begun to ensure proper drainage. It was being done in-house. They had met with the representative from the vendor, Playworld Preferred, as well as the installer and City Engineer Dave Borkowski, and they were on target to get it where it needed to be in order for installation to begin.

Destadio asked about a footnote on the bottom of the photo that said "option with pavilion." Bledsoe said that was left over from an old plan. At one time, they talked about tearing down the existing pavilion, but that would be cost-prohibitive.

She presented a rendering showing what the playground would look like. The original bid was \$435,000, which was what they had budgeted. They liked the playground itself, but felt it needed more shade. There were three comments she had heard from users of the playground: need more shade, more seating, and the ramp provided for special needs children was good, but once they got to the higher level, they could do nothing. They were dedicated to providing inclusive play—there would be many things that all children could enjoy. She showed another view from the swing side that included some of the interior equipment. Imagination play was a trend in recreation, and there were a couple of small houses for that in the small children's area, but there were active play features, as well.

The estimated ship date was January 24, with arrival set for the first week of February. There would be three tractor trailer loads of equipment parked in the lot at All Children's Playground, so they would lose a little parking temporarily. Installation was set to start in mid-February. Bledsoe explained that the installers were, like many construction firms, a little behind right now, but Playworld had used them before, and she had rather wait a few weeks and get someone that was good and familiar with the equipment. Construction was estimated to take eight to 10 weeks. Most of that would be for the shade structures and the requirements for the wind loads. The footings for the shade structures had to be deep and large and would probably take up the majority of the installation time. Because it was right by the lake, there was a water table to deal with, so that required some consideration as well.

She again said that shade had been important all along. When they got the first diagrams back, they loved the equipment, but there was not enough shade. She came back to Council late last year and asked for and received \$45,000 for additional shade and seating.

Bledsoe said she could not wait for May to come but realized there would be weather delays. There were certain weather conditions they needed for certain things.

King asked if they were still looking at closing the playground for two weeks? They had built a path over to the right, and it would never be blocked, Bledsoe reported, so there should be access to the playground the entire time. There would be no closure.

Caola asked if the old equipment could be re-purposed for use at some of the City's other playgrounds? She mentioned the little airplane specifically. Bledsoe said they would certainly look at that but noted that they had replaced the airplane four times in the last 10 years, so she could not recommend re-purposing it, but they would see what they could do with the other equipment.

Destadio said they visited some playgrounds in Newnan while on a trip with the Mayor, and the shade coverings were mildewed. Were they putting up shade coverings that could be cleaned so there wouldn't be a problem with mildew? They would be standard shade sails like they had at the splash pad and at several picnic pavilions, Bledsoe noted, and could be pressure washed and had a 10-year warranty against fading and tearing. Would they mildew? Destadio asked. Bledsoe said it depended on how much sun they got, and these would be out in full sun all day. He asked about the color, and she replied they would be a medium blue, but there was a darker shade available. Destadio explained the ones they saw were tan and were dark with mildew.

What surface was being used? Destadio went on. It was a bonded rubber surface, Bledsoe replied. She said the one they had now was called pour in place. It was a little different application and could be resurfaced every year to protect from water intrusion, which was the number one cause of failure. The benefits of the rubber surface were one of things they discussed in Griffin. Destadio said he had heard people complain of electric shocks at the playground, but Bledsoe said that occurred with they put the turf grass in over the pour in place. They combated the static electricity by spraying fabric softener on the turf.

Destadio said he had put a lot of playgrounds in at schools and knew there were requirements that the installer be certified for special needs uses. Bledsoe said they required those certifications, and that was one of the reasons they would be waiting for this installer.

What would happen to the old park? Learnard asked. It would be dismantled, and the equipment re-purposed if possible. The City Manager would have to answer questions about how the space would then be used. Bledsoe said she knew a bridge between All Children's Playground and Drake Field was going in. They intended to sod the area, and it would be green space.

King moved to adjourn to executive session at 7:05 p.m. to discuss personnel and pending or threatened litigation. Destadio seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

King moved to reconvene in regular session at 7:33 p.m. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.



Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Kim Learnard, Mayor