

City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 17, 2019
6:30 p.m.

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met in regular session on Thursday, January 17, 2019. Mayor Vanessa Fleisch called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Others attending: Terry Ernst, Mike King, Kevin Madden, and Phil Prebor.

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognition

Fleisch noted that in preparing for 2019's celebration of the City's 60th anniversary, they had discovered the Police Department would be celebrating its 50th year of service as well. Police Chief Janet Moon said special commemorative badges had been issued to all officers, and she presented the Mayor and Council with framed badges and patches from the Department.

2019 State of the City Address

Fleisch shared her annual State of the City address, presented earlier that day to the Peachtree City Rotary Club. Her remarks included:

Last year was a phenomenal year for Peachtree City; we completed many much-needed projects across the City including the largest public works project that Peachtree City has ever done, the spillway for Lake Peachtree. As you will recall, failure of the dam would have jeopardized the safety of homes and businesses downstream, as well as Crosstown Road.

We were also looking at the potential of losing the lake itself. Failure to address this threat could have resulted in an order by the State to drain the lake entirely and breach the dam. There were times when it was apparent that the lake could have been permanent marshland instead of what we have now. We now will be able to enjoy the lake for generations to come and know that our citizens downstream of the dam are safe in major storm events.

I will always be grateful to Mrs. Sandra Deal, Governor Deal's chief of staff, Chris Riley, Andy Welch, our attorney, and Commissioner Chuck Oddo for their roles in saving Lake Peachtree for generations to come. Thanks to the work of many people, The Lake Peachtree Spillway, Drake Field, and Spyglass Island are now iconic landmarks in our beautiful city. Each of those projects took many years to bring to fruition, and I am grateful that our citizens and their families can enjoy these formerly underutilized City properties.

*Decisions by local elected officials have long lasting effects on their cities. It is **so much** easier to **NOT** repair infrastructure due to the cost, which could raise taxes and potentially harm political careers. As a result, some elected officials will kick the can down the road on infrastructure, but at some point, you run out of road. Spending money on infrastructure is critical to a city's future.*

In 2014, Peachtree City ran out of road. Years of neglect had left our 24 square miles of City in a state of disrepair. The economic collapse of 2008 only exacerbated existing problems by hastening the decline in property values and the tax base. The decimation of the Public Works Department through furloughs in 2009 was the final nail in the coffin of the decaying infrastructure across the City.

*It has taken many years to get here, **but I believe that the City is in better shape today than it has been in decades.** We have laid the groundwork for the future by resolving issues that had been left unresolved for years.*

Storm water

In order to keep moving forward, we cannot forget the past. Developers built Peachtree City with very little oversight from the City for almost 30 years. As a result, many of the building materials used then are now reaching the end of their useful life. Across the city, we have 81 miles of storm water pipe, most of which is corrugated metal, which has a lifespan of 25 years. The average age of a pipe is 30 years.

Over the past five years, the Stormwater utility has either relined or replaced about 40,000 linear feet of pipe with materials that will last from 50 to 100 years.

When Spear Road collapsed, it had already been identified as a project that needed to be done, and the engineering plans had been drawn. While we were not able to prevent the collapse, we were able to finish that project quickly due to the preplanning that had been done.

We had a record rainfall in 2018 -- 70 inches in our area. While other communities struggled with collapsing storm water infrastructure, we did not have any major issues, and that is thanks to the successes of the storm water utility management.

However, despite many successes, there are those who still advocate for the abolishment of the utility in order to save money. To me that is penny wise and pound foolish, as many of the projects we are doing now should have been done years ago when they would have been less expensive. So now, we are still catching up and paying more to do so. Our utility is doing well, and, while we cannot predict any future failures, we can be proactive and try to prevent any future collapses as was done at the corner of Peachtree Parkway and Flat Creek.

WASA

Since its inception, the board of WASA was made up of volunteers from our community. This changed last year. After attempts failed to rein in the prior Board's determination to extend sewer outside the city limits without the City's consent, The Mayor and City Council initiated efforts in 2017 to amend the enabling legislation of WASA, changing the Board makeup from being appointed positions to being the Mayor and Council members. Legislation passed and was signed by the Governor last year. Thank you to Representative Josh Bonner and Senator Marty Harbin for their help and leadership. The Mayor and Council now sit as the Board of Directors of WASA. This new Board was seated in July of 2018.

Since assuming control, we have:

- Halted deficit spending planned for in prior budgets. Deficit spending in 2019 of the magnitude seen in 2017/2018 would have resulted in a violation of our Bond Coverage Ratio
- Cancelled contracts and capital projects that are not mission critical
- Halted a substantial rate increase recommended in a study commissioned by the prior Board
- Established a 10-year prioritization of capital and maintenance projects
- Restructured management and staffing, eliminating two middle management positions, and reducing budgeted staffing from 34 positions to 29
- Implemented financial and accounting controls and software consistent with the City's successful policies

The new board and leadership are encouraged about the future of WASA and are looking forward to 2019.

Recreation

Our parks were also in terrible shape. Last year we were able to do some larger park projects like the new skateboard park that replaced the one on McIntosh Trail, redoing the BMX track and building the pavilion at Drake Field and renovations to the amphitheater. We maintain over 416 acres of parks, 3,700 acres of green space, tennis courts, ball fields, swimming pools and more across the City.

Redevelopment

We have over 11,000 single-family homes whose average age is 28 years old. According to Georgia MLS, the average sales price for a home in Peachtree City last year was \$404,623. Construction value of new residential homes was over \$66 million. In addition, homeowners reinvested over \$12 million in their homes through remodeling and other projects.

In Peachtree City, 80% of the land is residential. The remaining 20% of the land is commercial or industrial. To put things in perspective, we have 14,661 total residential dwelling units and three code enforcement officers to handle complaints. I did not even include the number of business that they also monitor for complaints. The recent annexations into the city account for only about 100 acres of land. So for the most part, we are built out. Some of the pockets of undeveloped land are adjacent to residential, so many of those pockets of undeveloped land should be zoned residential to be consistent with their surroundings.

Currently our commercial properties are 97% full.

During the downturn, we realized that we needed to try to adopt at least three initiatives to help shore up the tax base so that the City can maintain itself in the future: redevelopment, adding density, and annexation

The city is 60 years old this year, and redevelopment and incentives for redevelopment need to be topics of discussion. To that end, we are in the process of looking at the area around City Hall as a potential spot to redevelop so that we can make the highest and best use of this corridor. Redeveloping this area was a part of the conversation when we did the most recent comprehensive plan with our citizen volunteers. We have engaged Historical Concepts and have consulted with residents who were here during the formative years of the city to help formulate ways to make the city hall area a more vibrant asset for the city.

The next step is to apply for planning and implementation grants. It is my hope that we will win the grant to help move this process further so that we can look at ways to revitalize this area and spur private investment in our City.

If the redeveloped areas have a higher density, that could help to maintain the tax base for the City. The goal is to add to the tax base. This will enable the City to not have continual increases in our citizens' taxes. The total property taxes currently collected are enough to pay for the police and fire departments. The rest of the \$37 million budget is from sales taxes and franchise fees permits.

The third element of making us stronger financially in the future is through annexations. Annexation should not, in my opinion, be the answer to future budgetary concerns. However, some annexations make sense given the growth boundaries that have been outlined by the Planning Department for years. As a result, there were annexations done on the east side of 54 that included Stein Mart and Publix, which are now in the City.

One of the concerns that I had years ago with annexation was quite simple: why would Peachtree City annex and then have to take care of additional roads and provide services for a larger area when the City couldn't even maintain what it currently had? Now that the

City is on an upswing, we are at the point where we can be more proactive in our maintenance versus being constantly reactive to the crisis of the day.

In the past, multiple issues came up due to poorly constructed buildings roads or cart paths. As an example, instead of fixing the paths that had tree roots, the policy was to pave over the bump. There were sections of the path around Lake Peachtree that had four layers of path just to smooth out the roots.

Police Department

Our traffic safety initiatives have been awarded at the State and National level in education, enforcement, engineering, effectiveness of efforts, training, and policy for several years. Our professional work force of educated and experienced officers, who pass extensive background investigations, provides for fewer internal and external complaints. In the current trend of tremendous media scrutiny of the police profession, our workforce continues to operate within our enforced guidelines to protect the officers and the department from unnecessary scrutiny.

Our internal Police Department recruiting programs, which target highly qualified and educated employees, along with our robust career development and training programs have resulted in many of our talented officers being recruited to State and Federal law enforcement agencies. This has resulted in a loss of highly experienced and skilled workers. The department has already doubled the record for the number of officers hired in one year.

2019 will mark the 50th anniversary of our wonderful Police force! Thank you for all you do!

Fire Department

Our Fire Department continues to answer around 4,000 emergency calls a year. In order to make our response times even faster, we now have a quick response station, with an ambulance that was purchased with SPLOST funding, located in a strip mall on the south side of the City close to assisted living communities that account for the majority of their calls. Having this quick response station has saved the City both the cost of construction and the ongoing personnel costs necessary to operate a larger station like the other ones we have in the City.

Traffic

In 2014 we did an analysis of the 54 west corridor, which is a state-owned and -operated road, to see what, if anything, could be done to make the traffic in that area flow better. We shared the results of the study with GDOT, and we worked very well with them to help complete two major projects; the intersections of 54 and MacDuff and 54 and Planterra. Ultimately, it is the traffic volume, at over 36,000 cars a day, that is the issue. 36,000 cars a day is also the benchmark for the possibility of going to six lanes. We also learned this year that the traffic along 74 North is close to that number as well.

The 74/85 interchange is moving forward with purchasing land for the right of way. GDOT has been working on the new displaced left turn for 54 and 74, and we will hear more about this in a few months. GDOT really went to bat for us and secured \$10 million in federal funding for this project. This is unheard of for one city to get this much money for a single project and in such a short amount of time.

I continue to be grateful for this effort by GDOT and look forward to working with them on this great addition to the city.

Public Works and Buildings and Grounds

I cannot emphasize enough the tremendous amount of work that has been done throughout the City by Public Works and Buildings and Grounds. They do the signs, cart paths, lawn mowing, field maintenance, subdivision entrances, and more. I am incredibly grateful for their efforts in turning this City around and helping to bring back standards that had been lost.

We made tremendous strides in paving across the City, completing 14 and a half miles of road, much of which were in such poor condition that they needed to have a full depth reclamation, meaning that they had to basically be rebuilt. Some of the roads were so poorly constructed that they did not even have a roadbed. They were asphalt on dirt and needed to be built.

Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Convention and Visitors Bureau, or CVB, went through much needed changes last year. We welcomed Kym Hughes as the new director, and the CVB is now an active component of the City.

Something you all may have seen is Expedia ranking Peachtree City as the number one place to visit this year! That was really something very unexpected, and I suspect Kym and her team will make the most of this accolade. Kym has also been working on the 60th anniversary.

I look forward to a productive 2019 for the City and our citizens. Together we will continue to make Peachtree City a wonderful place to live.

I would like to unveil for you, along with Council, the new logo for the 60th anniversary of the City.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Agenda Changes

There were no changes to the agenda.

Minutes

King moved to approve the December 20, 2018, regular meeting minutes. Ernst seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Quarterly Reports – 4th Quarter 2018

There were no comments on the Quarterly Reports.

Consent Agenda

1. Consider Indemnification of Public Officials
2. Consider Legal Organ – Fayette County News/Today in Peachtree City
3. Consider Call to Election Resolution
4. Consider New Alcohol License – Shop at Stevens Entry, 200 Stevens Entry (formerly Graham's BP)
5. Consider Stormwater Management Agreement – South 74, LLC
6. Consider Budget Amendment – FY 2019, Convention & Visitors Bureau
7. Consider Elimination/Replacement of Position – Convention & Visitors Bureau
8. Consider Bid for F-350 Dumping Stake Bed – Speedway Ford
9. Consider Bid for Bobcat E85 Excavator – Bobcat of Atlanta
10. Consider Amendment to Alcohol License – Out-of-State Criminal History Requirements

Ernst moved to approve Consent Agenda items 1-10. Madden seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Agenda Items

There were none.

New Agenda Items

01-19-01 Public Hearing – Consider Variance from Sec. 18-165(e) & (f), Fencing Residential Standards, 109 Bandon Way

Senior Planner Robin Cailloux said this request was for a variance from the section of the building code that limited a fence along a public road to a maximum of four feet. This property was in Everton, phase one, and was a corner lot on Eadestowne Way and Bandon Way. The house faced Bandon Way, with a six-foot fence along Eadestowne that was built by the developer without a permit in 2014. Planning staff became aware of this fence when a neighbor requested a permit for a similar fence. That request was denied because it violated the code, and the neighbor pointed out that there was an identical fence at this home. Code Enforcement notified the violators and were informed that the fence had been erected prior to the current ownership of the property. Cailloux said staff at the time the fence was installed notified the developer to submit a permit application, but there was no record of them having done so. When the current property owner became aware of the violation, they requested this variance so they could keep their fence.

Cailloux explained that variances were reviewed against six criteria. The first was if there were special circumstances unique to the property that other properties did not share, and Cailloux said there were not; there were many corner lots in the City. The second criterion was whether the ordinance deprived the owner of a privilege others were granted. The fence requirement was City-wide, Cailloux noted, not based on Zoning Code alone. There had been cases where similar fences built incorrectly had been required to be removed. The third was if there were extraordinary circumstances to the intended development. This property was developed similarly to others, so that did not apply. The fourth criterion was whether granting the variance would constitute a special privilege not given to others. Cailloux said it would. Fifth, would the variance be detrimental to public health and safety? Cailloux pointed out that, in this case, the higher fence would not pose a sight distance hazard. Lastly, would the variance create an inconsistency with the Comprehensive Plan? Cailloux said staff did not believe it would be inconsistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Fleisch opened the public hearing.

Attorney Rick Lindsey represented the applicants, Dave and Cheryl Moulton. He clarified that they did not erect the fence; the builder did when the house was built until 2016. According to his clients, the fence was erected around the time the certificate of occupancy was issued and was in place when they closed on the property on July 6, 2016. The fence was not up when they first saw the house, and they told the developer they loved the house, but needed a privacy fence to keep passersby from looking in the side windows and door, as well as onto the patio. He said they had no idea there was a problem with the fence until the City notified them recently. He pointed out that the bottom four feet of the fence was solid, but the upper 18 inches were open.

Lindsey noted there had been cases where the City had granted variances for fences on corner lots when the side property posed an issue. He recalled one on Fisher's Luck a few years ago. Lindsey said this was a small lot, only a fifth of an acre, and the house was on most of the buildable portion. There was no other way to screen the living area because there was no room for landscaping. The small size of the lot should qualify this property under the first criterion, he said,

and, because Council had granted these variances in the past, it was not a special privilege. Lindsey believed they met all six of the criteria for obtaining a variance and presented letters from nine neighbors saying they had no objection to this fence. Lindsey said, to his knowledge, no one in the neighborhood objected to the fence; it matched all the other fences in the subdivision and was attractive. He concluded by saying the applicants believed a variance was appropriate.

No one else spoke either in favor or in opposition to the variance, and Fleisch closed the public hearing.

King said he drove by the property and found nothing to complain about in the aesthetic value. He said the fence offered privacy and, with the close proximity of the sidewalk to the patio, he saw a need for it.

Prebor said he, too, viewed the fence and thought it fit into the site and was a good addition for needed privacy.

Ernst also had been by the site and had no objection to the variance. His concern was the builder's failure to obtain a permit, because this was not the first instance of that. Ernst did not know how this could be fixed, but it was a concern. In the future, the City needed to be on top of inspections and follow-through. In this case, though, he had no objections.

Madden also had no objections.

Fleisch recalled a similar situation of a fence on Blue Smoke several years ago. She wondered if the City needed to look at the fence ordinance in general since smaller lots were becoming more common, and people wanted privacy. The ordinance was written with larger lots in mind. Fleisch agreed with Ernst about construction without permits and said it was happening too often. She asked Cailloux if they could look at changing the ordinance to allow for higher fences on these smaller lots, Cailloux said she would work with the City Manager to follow Council's direction. Fleisch said the increasing incidence of smaller lots, particularly in the West Village, would guarantee this situation would come up again.

Madden moved to approve granting a variance for New Agenda item 01-19-01. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

01-19-02 Public Hearing – Consider Variance to the Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 1008.4(g), Front Setback, 312 Dividend Drive

This request was for property south of SR 54, Cailloux said, in an Industrial Zoning District. This was a corner lot fronting both Dividend Drive and Prospect Park, and was identified as one of the last remaining pieces of undeveloped industrial property in the City. It had been platted many years ago when development standards were for smaller sites than those required today. The variance was requested by a potential buyer, who wished to purchase two lots and combine them into one three-acre corner lot. The buyer intended to have a mill yard, offices, and parking, but could not without disturbing the front parking setback required along Prospect Park. They proposed a development plan that reduced the impact, Cailloux said, showing a depiction of the site. The ordinance required a minimum parking setback of 50 feet. The applicant was asking to encroach into the setback along Prospect Park by 25 feet to allow for parking.

Staff had reviewed against the six criteria for variances. She noted that the ordinance recognized the size of the property as a special circumstance, and, in this case, the three-acre size was smaller than the typical industrial property. The strict application of this ordinance would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, Cailloux said, pointing out that if the standards were applied,

the applicant could not use the property as proposed, even though what was proposed would be compatible with surrounding development. There were exceptional or extraordinary circumstances that would not apply to other property in the same zoning district, Cailloux stated, again mentioning the size of the property. Issuing the variance would not result in the granting of special privileges, according to Cailloux, who reported that staff had identified only one remaining corner industrial property of this scale, located south of this property at the corner of Dividend Drive and Dividend Court. That tract was four acres and was the only property with similar circumstances to this one. Staff did not believe granting this variance would be detrimental to public health and welfare and would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, which encouraged industrial development to broaden the tax base.

Fleisch opened the public hearing.

Chuck Ogletree, the applicant, said he owned South-Tree Enterprises, a general contracting business located on Commerce Drive. His intention was to relocate their offices to this site and include another company he owned, Champion Millworks, currently located in Tyrone. They needed to relocate that warehouse facility to Peachtree City and get all the operations under one roof. Ogletree said they found very few industrial tracts in Peachtree City and worked with their civil engineers to see what they could do with these two parcels. That was when they discovered the two front setbacks, noting they had just finished developing a 10-acre site on the corner of Huddleston and Paschal with a similar issue. That site was, obviously, much larger than the three acres they were now dealing with.

Ogletree continued that he understood Council's reluctance to grant variances due to the precedents they set, but, as stated earlier, there were very few tracts of undeveloped industrial property left in the City, with just one with similar characteristics to this one. He said he did not feel they would be setting a precedent for the future by granting this variance. They intended to abide by the 50-foot setback along Dividend Drive, which was the main thoroughfare and had the longest frontage. There was a detention pond along one side. The millwork shop needed a yard, which could be in the rear and screened from the rest of the property, if the setback variance were granted.

Ogletree reminded Council that he had worked in Peachtree City for many years and always tried to abide by the existing ordinances. He worked with Planning and Zoning quite a bit to avoid having to come before Council, but felt this situation was unique. He wished to develop this property in an aesthetically pleasing manner for his business and for the City.

No one else wished to speak either in favor or in opposition to the variance. Fleisch closed the public hearing.

King said Council had known for years that, with decreasing land available, these situations would arise, and variances would be needed. It seemed reasonable to grant this request to bring another needed business to town.

Prebor noted that Ogletree would be maintaining the 50-foot setback on Dividend, while Prospect was a dead-end cul-de-sac. He said he had no problem with the variance.

Ernst agreed that the variance should be granted, saying he did not see any other way it would work.

The property's unique shape and size justified the variance, Madden commented.

King moved to approve New Agenda item 01-19-02 and grant the variance to the zoning ordinance, Sec. 1008.4(g), Front Setback, 312 Dividend Drive. Madden seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

01-19-03 Consider Animal Control Ordinance Amendment – Elimination of "Voice Command" Option at Drake Field

City Manager Jon Rorie told Council they had a cover memo in their meeting packet with a recommendation to eliminate the voice command option at Drake Field from the animal control ordinance. He wanted to explain the reasoning behind staff's recommendation.

In 2011, Rorie related, he adopted a dog as a friend for his autistic son. Since then, they had both grown, and the dog, Scarlett, had become part of the family. Rorie understood the emotional component of issues like these. When Scarlett was adopted, the family lived on a one-acre lot, with plenty of room for play. Later that year, they moved to an apartment in Peachtree City, followed by a home on a quarter-acre across from the Glenloch Recreation Center. Rorie's son now took his dog, on leash, to walk in the park at Glenloch nearly every day. He even had neighbors tell him that his dog should be on a leash in his own yard. They also came him to discuss others not cleaning up after their own dogs. Rorie said there was an emotional component to his view of dog ownership, but there was also a professional side that had to be considered.

In 2010, the City adopted a leash policy. Rorie became Community Services Director in 2011, dealing with common issues related to leashes, off-leash, park locations, and other things regarding animals. Around 2012, the Recreation Director came to him and asked to ban dogs from the Shakerag Arts & Crafts Festival because dogs were nipping and barking at each other. However, Rorie said it made no sense to allow dogs at the adjacent dog park but prohibit people from walking into festival. He noted that he failed to act that time.

In 2012, a dog bit a human at Drake Field, and the bite had required 30 stitches. Rorie attributed it to an isolated event and did not act. He still got reports involving code enforcement and off-leash encounters over the years, but on December 15, 2018, he received an email from a veterinarian who questioned the wisdom of the off-leash policy at Drake Field. Rorie said he still did not act, but asked City Clerk Betsy Tyler to start compiling information on complaints tracked by the City, noting there were many complaints that were not formally logged. On December 27, there was a dog bite at Drake Field, Rorie remarked, and on December 28, he decided to change the signage at Drake Field to require dogs to be on-leash. It was an executive, administrative decision based on the history and a repeat occurrence. Rorie did not see how he could fail to act at that point, so he changed the signs to read leashes were required. He knew people would say it was unenforceable, but that was beside the point. Since then, the restrictions had been debated on social media, and he had received about 17 emails on the topic. Opinions seemed about evenly divided.

Rorie said he did not make decisions based on social media and emails. He made this decision because he had to act after seven years of inaction and, now, multiple incidents. Going forward with his action would depend on amending the Animal Control Ordinance. He again stated there was an emotional side, as well as a substantive side, to this issue. Rorie asked Tyler to review the history of this subject.

Tyler said the first Animal Control Ordinance was adopted in 1967, stating that dogs could not run at large unless they had a rabies vaccine. In 1970, the ordinance was amended to say that dogs off of their property must be leashed or under "immediate control," with "voice command" added as an option in 1992. In 2002, a committee formed to raise money to open a dog park,

and the City donated three acres at Shakerag Knoll the following year. The committee raised all the money for the fencing and improvements.

In 2010, the City reviewed requests to ban specific breeds of dogs, which had come up several times over the years. Council decided to research the issue, but there was no conclusive information. They did learn that the City's Animal Control Ordinance did not align with the County's due to the voice control option, which was removed in the City's ordinance in 2010, meaning voice control was no longer an option on the cart paths. At that time, some residents were concerned that their dogs would no longer be able to swim in Lake Peachtree, so Council restored the voice command option at Drake Field, with the intent to review the issue as needed. Tyler recalled that there was some discussion at the time of requiring that dogs go through training to prove they were obedient to voice command. The language was ultimately added to the ordinance required only that an animal be under voice command of a competent person at Drake Field in accordance with the posted rules, except during special events or City events. Tyler said that acknowledged that the situation changed when there were more people present, and dogs needed to be on leashes.

Tyler then gave some history of Drake Field's usage, noting that from 2010 to 2013, it was not a heavily used park. During that same time, the Comprehensive Plan update showed residents wanted more passive community events and a central gathering place. Lake Peachtree was non-existent from 2014 to 2016 due to the dredging, but when that was finished, Drake Field was regraded, redressed, and electricity and lighting were added to provide a more appealing centralized location. In response to the desires expressed in the Comprehensive Plan for more community events, the Night Market was started in 2017 and had been extremely popular. In late 2017 through mid-2018, the lake was lowered again for spillway construction. The path and pavilion were added in 2018 to complete the plan. Drake Field was now the premier passive park in Peachtree City, Tyler stated.

Tyler showed the posted rules signage that had been in place at Drake Field until Rorie changed it on December 28. It read: *You are entering the Drake Field Off-Leash Area (OLA).*

- *DO keep dog under voice control*
- *DO respect other park users. Stop bothersome behavior immediately.*
- *DO use plastic bags to clean up after your dog.*
- *DO keep your dog leashed during events and as leaving*

Tyler highlighted a statement at the bottom of the sign: *Public opinion relies on the behavior of you and your dog. The success of this OLA depends on what you do.*

In December 2018, Tyler reported, park users were not following the posted rules as stipulated in the ordinance. They were allowing dogs off leash without exercising voice control, and many were not cleaning up after their dogs. Meanwhile, the park was seeing more usage overall, and the City was getting more complaints from taxpayers who wanted to use the new park, but were afraid of the uncontrolled dogs.

Tyler said that, in addition to the 2012 bite incident, there had been seven calls to 911 regarding dogs at Drake Field between 2012 and 2018, an average of one per year. In the fall of 2018, a City contractor was forced to climb on top of a storage building due to fear of being attacked by an uncontrolled bull running towards him. Tyler noted that City employees and contractors regularly worked in the park now. The veterinarian Rorie mentioned wrote that he was walking a small, leashed dog at Drake Field when a larger, unleashed dog confronted them. The veterinarian also said he had treated many dogs and seen humans injured by dogs supposedly "under voice control." The vet advised that even the best dogs would bite under certain circumstances, and

felt the off-leash policy was a potential liability for the City. A follow-up letter signed by 12 local veterinarians recommended eliminating voice command at Drake Field.

Rorie said he asked City Attorney Ted Meeker about the City's potential liability. Meeker explained that the Georgia Recreational Property Act provided a layer of protection for the City, but that layer of protection was not absolute. Rorie noted that the City's liability was not his basis for moving forward in this. The City might be named in a host of actions because they had the "deep pockets." Even if they were not ultimately liable, money would be spent defending the case. Rorie emphasized that, while there was some protection, it was not absolute.

Tyler said the City received another complaint on December 26, noting that Christmas Day and the day after had very nice weather, and many people and dogs were outside. The letter writer said he and his wife were confronted at Drake Field by a large dog that attempted to jump up on them. The owner eventually was able to call the dog and restrain it. The letter writer said he observed someone who had a rambunctious dog on a leash being urged to "let her run" by another dog owner. The owner unleashed the dog, and it took off around the park, chasing other dogs and uncontrolled by its owner. The same writer submitted a photo of a young family kicking a soccer ball, not in the park, but in the grassy area between the parking lot and the highway because they were afraid of the unleashed dogs.

Tyler continued that the December 27 bite incident required a tetanus shot and antibiotics for the victim. Staff had seen the doctor's report and photos of the bite on the day it occurred and 10 days later. December's three incidences equaled three years' worth of 911 calls in three days.

Tyler explained that the City required dogs to be on a leash when they were off their property in every other location and park (with the exception of the fenced dog park). Dogs were not allowed at all on City playgrounds, tennis courts, or basketball courts except for authorized dog training program. At any recreational park, dog owners had to clean up after their dogs and carry the means with them to do so under the Parks Ordinance.

At Rorie's request, Tyler said, they had prepared an amendment to the ordinance that codified the actions he had taken by eliminating subparagraph (c), which had the voice command option at Drake Field. It also clarified that only a physical leash held by a competent person could be used for dog control off the owner's property.

Rorie summarized that the recommendation of staff was to remove subparagraph (c) and the voice control option, and to require leashes for animal control. He said this action was not taken arbitrarily, but was based on a long history of issues and complaints, with some people calling the off-leash option at Drake Field "an experiment that failed."

Rorie wanted to add to the record some emails that represented those he had received after changing the signage. One said, in part: *"I'm not a dog person, and I shouldn't have to be (a dog person) in a City park. This is not the first time I've had trouble with someone's dog not responding to voice commands while I was at Drake Field. I have friends who have dogs, and I understand dog owners' desire to treat their pets like one of the family, but when someone's dog doesn't behave well enough to be around people, they should be on a leash and controlled by owners. I don't envy the Council for making this decision, but I do hope they do the right thing and make the leashing of dogs a requirement at Drake Field."*

Another read: *"Please keep in place the rules that requires dogs in Drake Field be leashed. Dogs have been a problem in Drake for some time. A typical trip to the park will include one or more dogs running up to you, with an owner some 20 yards away, yelling 'Don't worry; he's friendly.' The*

voice command rule was simply unenforceable. Who decides the criteria? You're asking dog owners to self-regulate. Peachtree City has a dog park. Dog owners arguing for reinstatement of the voice command have said they need Drake Field because bad dog owners at the dog park permit aggressive dogs to attack their dogs. Rather than supporting reinstatement of the voice command rule, their argument actually supports the position that dog owners cannot be relied upon to control their animals. Dogs in public places need to be leashed."

Rorie then read excerpts from letters written by citizens who wanted the voice control rule to stay in place. "The perfect solution for me would be to see nothing changed. Half of the users are everyday users. They are willing to make sure others know and respect the rules." Rorie said they proposed alternate locations and other options for off-leash parks. The letter writer talked about how "the regulars are willing to help self-police and report the owners of dogs not under voice control. We believe having adults over there also will curb some of the illegal activities many have noticed." Rorie said that was a brief passage from the letter, not the entire letter.

Another letter also supported doing nothing. It concluded: "As voters, we will be making note of members who vote to keep Drake Field leash-free." Rorie said these were the types of letters he received all the time, whether in regard to paving, cart paths, Drake Field, or traffic. He noted that he had dealt with this issue for seven years and had chosen not to act, but now he said he did not see how he could possibly fail to act. With that, he again told Council he recommended they adopt the amendment to the animal control ordinance that would eliminate voice control at Drake Field and require leashing in all public facilities.

Fleisch noted that this was not a public hearing, but asked for a show of hands of people who would like to comment. She counted 17, noting that the ordinance allowed for 10 minutes but establishing 34 minutes for comments. The Mayor instructed speakers that they would be allowed to speak for a maximum of two minutes each per the ordinance and asked Tyler to keep track of time. She asked the speakers to line up, go to the microphone, and state their names and subdivisions prior to making their comments. She cautioned against repeating the same points and warned that no outbursts would be tolerated.

Greg King of Loblolly Circle said he was opposed for several reasons. The City would have to receive 443,000 complaints to have the bad quality of dog ownership that Rorie referred to. He said there were 11,000 homes and 3,000 or 4,000 multi-family units in Peachtree City and only three dog complaints lodged in a year. There would need to be 443,000 complaints in a 10-year period for Peachtree City to meet that ratio. King noted that 68% of U.S. households had pets. They were asking for just one one-hundredth of the park space in Peachtree City. The Mayor stated earlier there were 416 acres of park space in the City, and Drake Field was 3.3 acres. King said he understood that some people did not want to be around dogs, but there were 416 acres. Couldn't dogs have 3.3 acres, he asked. He said there were issues at the dog park. It was overcrowded, and people brought dogs that were not controllable. King reported he was an everyday user of Drake Field and had never seen any regular visitors not clean up after their dogs. About one time in 10, an owner did not clean up after a leashed dog, but if a regular user saw it, they would pick it up.

Savannah Ivy of Centennial said she and her husband had just moved to the City, primarily for the outdoor amenities. They loved having an area to be off-leash with their dog. She always picked up after her dog, but agreed there could be problems. She offered to help police the area.

Daryl Rickard was the retired veterinarian who wrote the letter Rorie read from earlier. He said he had an incident at Drake in December. Drawing on his experience during 40 years of practice, Rickard stated that leash laws save dogs. He said not one veterinarian that he approached

refused to sign the letter because they all knew that leashes were in the best interest of the dog. They saw fewer dogs hit by vehicles and fewer dogs maimed in fights when leashes were employed. Rickard reported he had seen dogs that were killed in fights. Leashes were the only way to ensure some control of dogs. Rickard said he would love to say every dog was great under voice command, but he had never seen a dog that was completely under voice command in all circumstances. At some point, there would be a situation that set them off. He was totally in favor of amending the ordinance to get rid of the voice command option.

Kristin Smith said she lived in Interlochen and went to Drake Field almost daily. She said she could see that Drake Field had evolved into something not compatible with this use, but there were compromises. If Council was going to take Drake Field, perhaps Spyglass Island, would be an alternative. It would offer the water that people wanted their dogs to swim in. The City could erect a sign noting that it was an off-leash area. This might make most people happy. She said there were not enough complaints to warrant banning off-leash areas entirely. A compromise could be reached.

Rockspray resident Ron Kempton told Council he once adopted a yellow lab and noted that labs had to swim. Kempton noted that his dog lived in the era of no leash laws. When they were on the trails and someone approached, the dog would come back to him and sit and wait. A lot of other dogs did the same. He said 98 or 99% of the people could contain their dogs with their voices before that law was changed. They used to go swimming at the boat docks, and his dog, Gracie, taught several other dogs to swim. Then, Drake Field was designated as the only point of entry to the lake. Kempton said dogs could not enter Lake McIntosh, even though deer could swim in it. He wanted a place for dogs to swim and enjoy their short lives. He now had two dogs, one a German shepherd. He thanked Council for listening to his concerns.

Amber Cornwell of Loblolly Circle remarked that she moved to Peachtree City from McDonough for the iconic outdoor spaces, such as the dog park, the skate park, and the BMX track. Drake Field might not have had the signs it needed because she had met people who were surprised by the dogs running free. Drake Field was a community gathering spot, and Cornwell had met many of her new neighbors there. The actions taken by most of the dogs were not odd to dogs, such as running in packs and playing. She asked Council to discuss this more and explore measures they could take to mitigate risks, such as the ones implemented for the cart paths.

James Turner of Bay Point said his family had multiple dogs. The larger dogs could be taken into public, but the smaller dog was left at home. His son was the primary user of Drake Field with his dog, but Turner said he often took his dog to the lake. The family loved German shepherds, which were prone to joint problems. The buoyancy of the water allowed them to get exercise without the pounding their joints would take on hard surfaces. The dog park was fine for its purpose, but did not have access to water. There were numerous lakes, lagoons, and ponds that could be opened to dogs as an alternative to Drake Field, Turner suggested.

Scott Derickson, a Centennial resident, said Council had to know this was coming, due to the development of the park. There should be a way to provide a place and be pro-active, rather than reactive. The sign banning off-leash dogs was placed with no input from anyone. Derickson asked Council to take a look at the dog park, saying it was in deplorable condition with no place to really run a dog or throw a Frisbee or ball.

Warmstone Path resident Amy Stitt said she rescued a dog a couple of years ago, and they often visited Drake Field and had made many friends. She said she had never seen an incident and noted she only saw responsible dog owners. The change in signage banning off-leash dogs was a big disappointment and made her very emotional because of what it would take away from

her and her dog. If it was a done deal, she wanted to know if there could be other options, such as designating certain hours for off-leash use or providing another location.

Jordan McBride of Hilltop Drive told Council Drake Field meant a lot to his family. He was raised in Peachtree City and appreciated the new development. He and his wife enjoyed bringing their dog and their baby son to Drake Field. This was the most convenient place for them to go with their dog. The City's slogan urged people to live in Peachtree City, work in Peachtree City, and play in Peachtree City. Drake Field was a big part of that. Having the off-leash option at Drake Field was important. He liked the fact that his son could play with the dog at Drake Field, not an option at the dog park, which prohibiting running small children.

A resident of Elm Drive said she had a 120-pound dog who enjoyed swimming in the lake and had never bothered anyone. The dog would not understand why he would have to be leashed after a year of running free. A few incidents should not hold back progress and hurt dogs who did no harm. She asked Council to re-think this. She said she would gladly purchase a permit to pay for park usage.

Tinsley Mill Village resident Kay Kadoni told Council she walked her dog every day at Drake Field, and there were usually about five to 10 dogs there. She said dogs tended to behave better off-leash and seemed more aggressive when they were leashed. The dogs ran and played. She said the park experience fostered a sense of community, but said she would be willing to accept time limitations or some other compromise in order to allow the dogs some off-leash time.

Karen McKernan of Whitfield Run described for Council how her Aussie/lab mix loved the ball and loved the water. She was under voice command. McKernan said they had been going to the park since the dog was a puppy and also enjoyed visiting the Farmers Market. McKernan observed that there were a lot of new people at the park, and they did not understand the rules. The regular Drake Field users were part of a community that looked out for each other and their dogs. She felt sorry for people who were afraid of the dogs. The City had kept the park from her for several years and use was just now coming back, with new users discovering it, too. Everyone was having to readjust and re-learn. She asked Council to allow time for them to get a system in place, and the users could control things. One of the biggest problems were kids on mechanized scooters on the sidewalks.

Jorge Salinas of Beechwood subdivision said he was there to represent his dogs who enjoyed the park very much. It did attract a lot of people who did not follow the rules, but he did not see why everyone should be punished for the actions of a few. He told Council it seemed they had already made up their minds about off-leash dogs. He said maybe three days a week for off-leash dogs would be a good compromise. He said he was 100% against this, and his dogs were, too.

Billy Adams of Meadow Run said, in response to the information the City presented earlier, he had on his phone a panoramic photo of a recent weekend afternoon at Drake Field showing dogs and families interacting alongside children. There needed to be some sort of compromise, he concluded.

Lynne Lasher of The Coventry said she was a big dog advocate, currently in a fight over animal issues with the County. But when she took her dog to Drake Field, she kept her on a leash, not because she was concerned about her dog, but about the other dogs. She said her dog was a mouthy little schnauzer who could incite other dogs to become aggressive, and she wanted to be able to pull her back quickly. Lasher believed the ordinance was originally written with swimming in mind, and she hoped an alternative spot could be provided for dogs to swim. However, Drake was not intended to be a dog park. There was a dog park for which the City

donated land. It had problems, but that was an issue that needed to be fixed by the people who ran it. Drake belonged to all the people of the City; it was not a dog park.

Ryan Hickman said he lived in Newnan and understood that his voice would not count, but his wife traveled from Newnan to Drake Field with their child and the dog, a German short-haired pointer who was very obedient. The dog was one of the best swimmers Hickman said he had ever seen, and it was not fair for Council to arbitrarily enact a rule denying off-leash dogs access to the parks. He noted that people got DUIs, but Council did not ban bars from selling alcohol.

Amanda McBride of Hilltop Drive said she was a stay-at-home mom who brought her son and dog to the park almost every day. She said dogs were more aggressive on a leash and she had seen several people knocked over by running dogs on leashes. McBride also noted that dogs needed to swim.

After the citizens had spoken, Prebor thanked everyone for comments. He said they had gotten a lot of emails for and against the change. Drake Field had changed over the years, and a lot more people visited the park. A lot of the dogs were well-mannered, but he could not agree with allowing off-leash at Drake Field, due to the number of people there. However, he said a number of emails mentioned finding an alternative location for off-leash play, and he felt Spyglass Island might be an alternative during certain times. Ten people mentioned compromise. Liability was an issue, of course. He asked Meeker if the City had the same liability for someone bitten at the dog park. Meeker said there would be the same concerns. Prebor listed some areas that had unfenced off-leash parks, including beaches, Alexandria, VA, and Washington, and Oregon. In New York City, there was an off-leash area in Central Park. If they could do it, Peachtree City should be able to figure something out, but he was not in favor of off-leash at Drake Field.

King said he agreed, to an extent. He had owned dogs most of his life, but there was a serious difference between voice control at home and in public. Dogs were curious animals that could be distracted by any smells or sounds. Their senses were keen to that. Owners might think their dogs were under voice command, but they were not, especially younger dogs. Dogs who were adopted as adults might be loving animals, but no one knew their past. They could live peaceably together, as in a case he reported, for eight years, then one could mortally wound the other, with both having to be put down. Dogs were dogs. He said since he had been on Council, he had gotten to know two of the most well-trained dogs in this City. Both belonged to the Police Department, and he would not want them off-leash aimed at him. He did not particularly care for off-leash anywhere, especially at Spyglass Island, where, it did not seem they could control much of anything. They had tried off-leash, and it did not work.

Ernst said he was a dog lover and had buried four in the 29 years he lived in Peachtree City. He currently had two dogs that had never been off of a leash. He and his wife walked their dogs a lot, always on a leash. He reminded everyone that, although not currently used as such, Lake Peachtree was a water reservoir. If swimming was banned at Lake McIntosh, it should be in Lake Peachtree. Anyone who had been to Spyglass Island since it was renovated would see a lot of handicapped people who would be frightened of unleashed dogs.

Prebor asked Ernst if he would consider having unleashed dogs on Spyglass Island at certain times. Ernst said that was just kicking the can down the road.

Madden acknowledged this was a passionate issue, and he had been a dog owner while growing up in New York City. Dogs became like children to a lot of owners. He said they could all agree that the best trained dogs on the planet, such as police dogs and dogs who did inspections at the airport, underwent rigorous training for months, but they were always leashed in public and

controlled by professionals. The question boiled down to the effectiveness of voice command. Madden said he visited the dog park last Saturday and spoke to every dog owner there. There were various signs about how to use the park, including one that prohibited food, beverages, and dog treats. Madden surmised this was to keep dogs from attacking another over food. Council's primary task was to maintain the health and safety of all citizens. He disagreed with the gentleman who said the three acres of dog park was not enough. He personally saw dogs running around and chasing balls and Frisbees. Madden said he asked people at the dog park about the off-leash option at Drake Field, and they all answered that it was crazy, pointing out Drake's usage by the elderly, children, and families with picnics. Madden thought the dog park was a wonderful place, with separate areas for different sizes and temperaments of dogs. The sign at Drake did not prevent dog owners from using the park with their pets. All that was expected was that a reasonable pet owner keep their dog on a leash.

Fleisch said she was the only one there who was on Council in 2010 when the latest version of the leash law was adopted. A number of people had wanted to keep off-leash as an option on the paths. As a former dog owner, she understood the emotional attachment, but it could not be looked at strictly with emotion. Council had a responsibility to 34,000 people. They tried it as a compromise in 2010 when they instituted the leash law throughout the City, but now Drake Field had changed. To move it somewhere else, she remarked, would result in someone coming back in six months with the same issues.

King moved to approve New Agenda item 01-19-03, elimination of "voice command" option at Drake Field. Ernst seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

01-19-04 Consider Guaranteed Maximum Price – SR 54 West Gateway Bridge

City Engineer Dave Borkowski presented the 60% design for the bridge, which established the "maximum guaranteed price." The project had been on the books for many years, he said, predating his tenure. A concept design and cost estimate had been done, but the project was killed several years ago due to the costs. It was included as project number nine on the current Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). Borkowski continued that, many years ago, the City purchased property on both sides of the highway for the bridge. It was important to remember they did not have to buy property, just obtain some easements on either end. The project was bid out as a design-build, meaning one contractor would design and build the project and was one of three projects awarded to Kiewit.

Borkowski showed a bird's-eye conceptual view of the bridge and the connecting cart path, which wound through the parcel on the north side because the property dropped away from the highway and the bridge rose 17 feet above the road in compliance with GDOT requirements.

Borkowski said the Gateway Bridge would be at the western entrance to the City, so they wanted an impressive structure that included retaining walls on either side of the road, with decorative facing similar to what was on the Spillway bridge. He again pointed out the height, saying there was a hill that must be dealt with.

Design demands affecting the cost included a half mile of path; 40,000 cubic yards of fill needed for the approach ramp; 900 cubic yards of excavation, and the clearing of three acres. Other demands included constructing 11,000 square feet of retaining wall. There would be a four-story height difference between the bridge and the tunnel under MacDuff Parkway, where they wanted to connect. Again, Borkowski emphasized, this was not an easy project; a short path would be too steep with the height difference. The bridge itself would be 154 feet long, which was close to the City's longest. There would be 300 tons of asphalt used on the path.

Borkowski went over three areas where cost variables could occur: civil, bridge/abutments, and administrative. Civil included clearing, grubbing, as well as installing erosion control and removing it. Utility relocations would be a major cost. On the shopping center side, there were aerial utilities that must be relocated. Excavations and backfill were an expense, as was the installation of storm drains. Other expenses in this category included landscaping and wall construction.

Fleisch jokingly asked if they could have picked a worse place to put this bridge. Borkowski said there probably were worse spots, but Rorie agreed this was not one of the better places.

Under bridge/abutments, Borkowski noted that the 154 feet of bridge was a 96,000-pound piece of steel that must be designed, built, transported from Alabama on semi-trucks, off-loaded from those trucks, and constructed. Permits must be obtained from GDOT. Rorie said the work would be done at night to keep traffic moving. Concrete decking and signage would be an expense. Pile drivers would be needed, and the abutments must be installed.

Administrative costs would include the design, which was complex for a project of this scale. Mobilization/demobilization, profit, bonds, and insurance were also administrative expenses. People must be paid to direct operations at the site on a daily basis. Permits would be an expense. They had floated everything by GDOT, but had not filed for the permits yet.

Borkowski said there was a cost increase over what was budgeted in the SPLOST. The original estimate had been based on a concept, not the actual engineered drawings. Quantities, materials, and ideas changed from concept to actual design. There had also been cost increases over the 12 years since the concept was created. Borkowski said they increased the cost in the SPLOST request, but design revealed the need for another 10,000 cubic yards of fill. Bridge costs had increased from the original by \$140,000. Asphalt and other projected path costs went up by about \$255,000. Utility relocations, drainage, and stormwater piping had not been included in the concept.

Staff recommended that Council authorize the City Manager to sign the contract with Kiewit to keep this project moving forward with design and construction. For funding, they recommended \$2.6 million from the SPLOST to finance the project in today's dollars, with \$750,000 to come from impact fees collected in the West Village. He noted that the majority of the users would be coming from the West Village, so it was fair that their impact fees be used to help pay for it. Right now, they had to go to the tunnels near Best Buy and come under SR 54, then work around Planterra to get to the shops directly across from MacDuff Parkway.

Fleisch asked about the timing. Borkowski said construction could start at the end of March/first of April after the final design was finished and easements were procured.

Rorie said he wanted to talk more about cost. He reminded everyone that the City had 100-plus miles of cart path, but said he never talked about specifics such as 101 miles or 108 miles. That was because they were constantly evaluating the path network, which was not about running paths anywhere they could, but about having an efficient network. The City had convened an infrastructure advisory group in 2017 to evaluate the cart path master plan, among other topics. The group identified certain projects that would enhance the path network. One of those projects was this bridge, which had been eyed since 2002. The plan was vetted by the infrastructure advisory group, put on the SPLOST list, and approved by voters by a 3-1 margin. Its purpose was to enhance connectivity throughout the City. Rorie said this could lead to other bridge projects, on SR 74 South, SR 54 East, and perhaps at the SR 54/74 intersection.

With this bridge in mind, the City updated its impact fee methodology in 2014, Rorie remarked. He said impact fees had been earmarked for recreation facilities, but the methodology was modified to use the money for the expansion of the path network. The impact fees from the 1,634 total new units around MacDuff Parkway would generate \$5,570,000 for paths and parks. Those new homes would ultimately pay the entire freight of this bridge that was being built as a SPLOST project to get it done in today's dollars. It would have been cheaper to have done it 10 years ago, Rorie observed, but they kicked the can down the road. The new residents of Cresswind and Everton would be paying for the bridge. Ultimately, there would be impact fees collected over the whole City from commercial development, and that money would be used to enhance the networks citywide.

Rorie went on to say that if this were an easy project, it would have been built a long time ago. Every one of the SPLOST projects involving the path network was difficult. Rorie again stated the recommendation was to use \$2.6 million in SPLOST funds and \$750,000 in collected impact fees to construct this project.

Ernst clarified if the maximum cost would be \$3.350,000 and not a penny more. Rorie said that cost was very general. For example, they said they would need 40,000 cubic yards of infill. But if they only used 38,000, that would result in a cost credit, he noted. Then, more stormwater pipe might be needed than anticipated. Rorie said he did not want to commit to an exact cost, but it would be in this range. Ernst said he was concerned it would become a project like the dam, with cost over-runs. He did not want to go over.

Rorie stated that they had already awarded the contract, and this item tonight was for the 60% design/build. The contractor had guaranteed the maximum price, but there could be cost over-runs and under-runs.

Prebor asked who would oversee the cost over-runs or under-runs. Rorie said some things would come back to Council, but on others, he would make executive decisions. For example, sometimes unsuitable soils had to be removed and replaced. This was common. If there was a dramatic shift in cost, he promised he would bring it to Council.

Fleisch noted that the paths leading to the bridge looked like a lot of hairpin turns and asked Borkowski if there would be guardrails or if the infill dirt would take care of the drop-offs.

Borkowski explained the asphalt path would be 10 feet wide, with five-foot shoulders on each side. The plans to put in golf cart railings similar to what was on MacDuff Parkway, with other safety features to keep carts from losing control and veering into a ravine.

A citizen asked if the bridge was long enough to accommodate SR 54 being widened. Fleisch said yes because the median would accommodate the additional lanes.

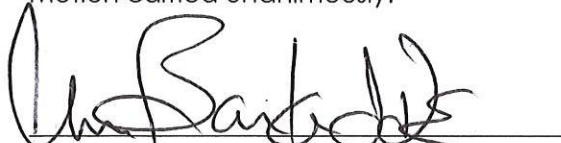
Madden said this was an addition to the City's transportation network. The paths were one of the City's way of moving people around. Since safety had been discussed earlier in the meeting, he said it was important to note that they had an obligation to the people on that side of the City to get them safely across the highway. He reminded Council that there had been a serious golf cart-automobile accident recently at the only crossing GDOT currently allowed on SR 54, at Publix. He said the time had come for this bridge.

King moved to approve New Agenda item 01-19-04, guaranteed maximum price – SR 54 West Gateway Bridge. Madden seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

Prebor noted that the City expected its appointed authorities and boards to manage as if they were being paid. He suggested starting a conversation on paying the volunteers for their time, mentioning the Planning Commission and Airport Authority as examples.

There being no further business to discuss, Ernst moved to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Vanessa Fleisch, Mayor