

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

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

Presentation

Playground Advisory Group

Several months ago, Recreation and Special Events Director Quinn Bledsoe related, several citizens volunteered to serve on an advisory group to look at existing playgrounds and offer suggestions about the future. Bledsoe noted that the referendum on the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) was coming up in March, and \$1 million of the SPLOST project money was earmarked for playground upgrades. So, if SPLOST passed, they would have some money for the changes the group had recommended.

Several group members were unable to attend this meeting, Bledsoe continued, but she wanted to share the names of all who served, saying it had been a pleasure to work with them, and she appreciated their service. The members were Amanda Sweda, Colby Brooks, Jessica Keegan, Kimberly Walton, Susan McElroy, and Jody Wenzel. The group was made up of parents with children ages 1 to 14, some with special needs. They lived in all parts of the City, and some were lifelong residents, while one has been a resident for less than a year. But, Bledsoe concluded, all were passionate about the future of Peachtree City.

Group member Keegan said she and her husband both grew up in Peachtree City and now were raising their family here. She explained how the group held multiple meetings, starting by looking at the playgrounds and tot lots now in the City, evaluating them for location, parking, and usage, as well as compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

They compared these playgrounds to some in surrounding communities, including Fayetteville, Newnan, and Senoia, discussing why they were willing to travel to other cities to use their playgrounds and why some of Peachtree City's playgrounds did not get much use. This helped them form a vision for what they wanted to create in Peachtree City.

She showed photos of some of the playgrounds that Peachtree City parents often traveled to, such as Seavy Park in Senoia. That park had restrooms and shade, along with separate climbing areas for older and younger children. However, the equipment was not of the highest quality, Keegan pointed out. Fayetteville's new City Center Park had a water feature and a lot of natural areas for climbing and play. She did note there was not as much ADA inclusivity as they would want in Peachtree City. City Center Park was very popular in part because of the destination aspect—there was a dog park, restaurants, and walking trails. They also visited Carl Miller Park in Newnan, which had a castle theme. It was spacious, with lots of shade, a toddler area, and a water feature. Keegan pointed out that this playground was privately owned rather than city funded.

Another group member, Walton, noted that she was a new resident, with a 3-year-old son. She had discovered that some playgrounds were more desirable than others, and the group had looked at what features accounted for the differences. Peachtree City had 23 tot lots and playgrounds, Walton reported, which was a big number for a city its size. They were spread out all over the City, with some

part of larger facilities, and others, especially the tot lots, tucked away with a feel of being an extension of the surrounding neighborhoods. It was not always clear that the tot lots were available for public use, she commented. She showed a map that illustrated the distribution of the parks.

They discovered that many of the playgrounds lacked diversity in the equipment, and she showed a photo of almost identical structures at three parks. This limited the level of engagement that families experienced when visiting the playgrounds. It could get boring, she remarked, when each location felt like an extension of a place you had already visited. It also would be good to have playgrounds that appealed to children of all ages. You could expect the same thing at all the playgrounds, with the exception of the newly-remodeled All Children's Playground. While the equipment might be similar, Walton said, the group noticed inconsistencies among the playgrounds in fencing, path access, restrooms and so on.

While they had a plethora of playgrounds and tot lots, Keegan stated, they all looked the same and had limitations that led citizens to go to a park in a nearby city. The group's suggestion was that Peachtree City focus on quality, not quantity, by investing in fewer, but larger and unique playgrounds. They wanted playgrounds suitable to children of all ages and abilities, such as at All Children's Playground. Right now, many facilities appealed only to younger children. They would like to see additional playgrounds with shade and water features. Adequate car and cart parking was important, too.

Keegan showed photos to illustrate what she was talking about, noting that most of them were themed playgrounds. Two had a farm theme, and she pointed out the opportunities for imaginative play. Another was wild-animal themed, while another showed a more natural take on a playground, with a slide on a grassy hill and rocks for climbing. There was a photo of equipment that enabled children with disabilities to interact with other children, like at All Children's Playground. The final photo showed a playground built like a pirate ship, opening up opportunities for imaginative play, Keegan noted. She asked if Council had questions.

Prebor recalled that they had talked in the past about getting rid of some of the tot lots, and Bledsoe said that was correct. The advisory group felt like there were more than were needed. In some areas, there were three or four very near to each other. The group felt strongly that there should be parking for golf carts as well as cars, Bledsoe reported, and that might help them decide which ones to eliminate. Closing playgrounds would require extensive study, she cautioned. At present there were 12 tot lots and 11 playgrounds.

Was there any estimate on what some of these projects would cost? Destadio wondered. The new All Children's Playground came out to around \$500,000, Bledsoe reported, saying it was what they called a "condensed" playground with a lot of things in a smaller space. It was very well-designed. Braelinn, where there was parking and a bathroom, was one place they could look to put another playground, and it would be another \$400,000 or \$500,000. The playground at Glenloch was replaced in 2014 for about \$40,000, but it was much smaller and costs also had gone up since 2014. They would need to develop a strategy, Bledsoe remarked.

Destadio said the group did a great job, and there was a need to update the playgrounds for all the young families coming in, but this would probably require a 15- to 20-year program.

What would be the maintenance costs? King inquired. At the new All Children's Playground, Bledsoe replied, the rope structure would have to be replaced in about 10 years. The poured-in-place rubber surface would eventually begin to flake and require seal coating. Swings would need to be replaced, but the costs were fairly minimal, she commented. They built All Children's Playground with an eye towards less maintenance.

King asked if they could plan on 10% to 12% of the original cost for annual maintenance? It would be closer to 5%, Bledsoe said, and Prebor said more like 1%, which would be \$4,500 a year. The biggest expense was probably staffing cost to pick up trash and blow leaves, Bledsoe stated. They should keep in mind that staff currently had to do that at all existing playgrounds, Interim City Manager Justin Strickland pointed out. If they used that rubberized surface elsewhere, it would not only meet the ADA requirements, but reduce maintenance costs by eliminating the need to add certified playground mulch at an increasing cost every year.

Prebor asked if they would go to the neighborhoods and give them a chance to take over the tot lots? Bledsoe said she thought that would be a great thing to do.

Learnard thanked the group for their work.

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognition

Learnard announced that on Friday, Council voted unanimously to make an offer to Bob Curnow of Coral Springs, Fla., to become the new City Manager, and he had accepted. She said he was extremely well-qualified and would take over in January. Prebor noted they looked at 73 applications, and Curnow was everyone's top choice. King added they were fortunate to get him, with Learnard saying she was sure the community would welcome him and his family.

Public Comment

Suzanne Brown commented on early voting, saying lines had been long. Also, the more recently annexed areas had not been assigned to precincts. Many people had left without voting in the City's special election because of the wait times, and she wanted the City to publicize that those people could return and vote in just the Peachtree City election on another day of early voting or on election day. Brown also noted that some precincts were not set up to allow people to vote in both the general election and the special election. For instances, voters in the Rising Starr precinct had to vote there in the general election, then go to the Braelinn precinct to cast a ballot in the Peachtree City special election. There were two other precincts in this situation. She said the City website should contain this important information first, and there should be signs at the precincts about the special election and about obtaining provisional ballots.

Agenda Changes

None

Minutes

October 20, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2022, Executive Session Minutes

October 28, 2022, Special Called Meeting Minutes

King moved to approve the October 20, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes, the October 20, 2022, Executive Session Minutes, and the October 28, 2022, Special Called Meeting Minutes.

Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

- 1. FY2023 Budget Amendment – DARE Donation**
- 2. FY2023 Acceptance of Donation and Budget Amendment**
- 3. Request to Reclassify one (1) Police Officer to Police Corporal in the Police Department**
- 4. Approval of Maintenance Agreement for Ambulance Equipment**
- 5. Flat Creek Timber Bridge Repairs and Crack Sealer**

Destadio moved to accept Consent Agenda items 1-5. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Learnard pointed out that they had just voted to accept a donation of \$1,800 from the Peachtree City Kiwanis Club for the DARE program and a donation from Bike-Walk Fayette and Southside Support Inc. for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) signage to mark trails and paths in six places. She thanked them all.

Old Agenda items

None

New Agenda items

11-22-01 Design of 54/74 Intersection Upgrades

City Engineer Dave Borkowski updated Council on the Department of Transportation's (DOT) progress with the displaced left turn (DLT). The design was complete, and they were finishing up the right-of-way acquisition process. Four parcels had been acquired; two had offers pending, and they were reappraising three other parcels, but that would not be completed until December. DOT said bids would be let in the spring of 2023.

Tonight, he stated, he was asking Council to approve funding for the creation of a plan for design enhancements of structures at the intersection. He showed photos of existing conditions looking both northbound and southbound near the intersection on SR 74. Another photo depicted what the approach to the intersection would look like if they did not fund design enhancements, with the DOT standard galvanized metal trusses across the road. A real world example of enhanced structures was a photo on SR 400.

DOT would put mast arms for the signal heads where possible, Borkowski pointed out, but they would be galvanized metal. There was one section where they would have to put up span wire with galvanized poles to hold the signals. This was at the widest part of the project, over the eastbound/westbound lanes of SR 54. DOT had promised there would be no concrete poles permanently, but they might be needed as a temporary measure.

The proposed enhancements, Borkowski explained, would enable them to keep the look of the rest of the 54/74 Corridor with powder-coated poles. Those were not standard; the City would have to pay for them. He showed a photo of the SR 54/Planterra intersection that had those type of mast arms and also decorative luminaires at the top of the poles. Any stand-alone luminaires would be on powder-coated decorative poles.

The biggest extra cost would be for more aesthetic supports for the truss where the big signs would go. He showed an example from Snellville, and suggested maybe something in brick with a logo affixed. This would support a powder-coated truss, which was the steel that spanned the highway. This might require sending it to an out-of-state facility to have the coating done, and that would affect the cost.

The high-level conceptual cost for these upgrades was about \$1.4 million, Borkowski stated, but that was approximate. Right now, he continued, they were just asking for the cost of the design, about \$144,500, to get them to a point where it could be included in the project. This would qualify as a project for the 2017 SPLOST, where there was \$881,000 earmarked for project #7. There was additional money in the SPLOST contingency fund to cover cost overages, if any.

If the City did nothing, DOT would still illuminate the intersection with streetlights. The agreement had already been signed, but the poles would be galvanized and not decorative. They would install galvanized signalized mast arms where possible, such as the one at Peachtree Parkway. Structural steel for the big sign supports would be galvanized and not decorative.

This was a "now or never" situation, Borkowski cautioned. DOT was on a timeline to get this out to bid early next year, and these upgraded designs would need to be included in the plans. If the money for the design was approved, the next step would be to issue the purchase order and have the design started. Next, they could come back to Council with the construction agreement with the DOT to include it in the project. There would be a better cost estimate by then, and Council would have to approve this funding amount for the construction.

Destadio asked how confident Borkowski was in the estimate? He replied that a cost estimate on any construction project without a final design was an educated guess, but he was sure it would go up. Destadio said they should come up with a final estimate and add 15%. Council was not going to approve something at \$3.4 million only to find out it would cost them \$5 million afterwards. He wanted a more accurate estimate, but Borkowski said they could not get one because there was no design yet to go by. This was a specialized design, and a final cost estimate was not possible at this point.

Prebor said it was not worth a million bucks or more. He had talked about the architect's fees with both Strickland and Borkowski, he remarked, saying Borkowski told him the architect's fees were based on a percentage of the project.

King agreed, saying he did not think it would be worth it.

Learnard said her position was unchanged from the last time they discussed this. Everyone in Peachtree City would have to go through that intersection for the rest of their lives, and she said they owed the citizens the best possible installation. She told King she thought he was on board with that. The structures could be industrial and utilitarian, or they could be Peachtree City-caliber, the Mayor commented. They must decide now; they could not go back later and change their minds. She wanted to feel they did the best they could with this installation to make it Peachtree City-style. It would be a shame, she continued, to want signage in the heart of their city to look like Highway 400 signage. Learnard added that she was very surprised the others felt differently.

Prebor said he would love to have it, but not at \$1.4 million. They had the money, the Mayor countered, but Prebor said they did not know what the economy would do. He did not like the idea, he said, of just spending because they had the money.

What if the number was \$3 million or \$10 million? Prebor asked Learnard. Would she still support it? She said she did not have a threshold right now because all they were talking about was the design. She proposed they see if they could get a nice design, then look at the numbers.

That was fine, King stated. Was it correct that they had to make a decision now on the design only? Borkowski said that was correct. That was \$144,000 and would come out of current SPLOST funds, he stated, and Borkowski again agreed.

Destadio commented that was good to know because he had misunderstood earlier. All they were talking about was the \$144,000? The Mayor said that it was. They would have to spend \$144,500 to get a design from an architect. That would be brought back to Council with some options, and they could say "no" at that time, she explained.

King said his concern was that the \$1.389 million Borkowski presented could escalate to \$2.8 million or more over the next year. Destadio said that was his point. He did not mind spending the money on the design but felt the final cost could be better estimated.

King suggested they go ahead and agree to the design. Then, in the near future, Council could look at the final cost and vote on it. Destadio said he could go along with that.

Strickland pointed out that, even in the event of a recession, SPLOST was reserved for specific projects. They would not be able to dip into a SPLOST project to carry operations. Prebor said they could use it on paving, which they were still behind on. The project was for that corridor, Strickland said, but King noted there were other things in the corridor where they could use the money.

King moved to approve New Agenda item 11-22-01, Design of 54/74 Intersection Upgrades. Destadio seconded. Motion carried 3-1, with Destadio, King, and Learnard voting in favor, and Prebor voting against.

Public Hearings

None

Council/Staff Topics

Paving Updates

Public Works Superintendent Jonathan Miller reported almost five miles of path had been resurfaced this year, and about half a mile of resurfacing was in progress on Corrigan Place, Shirewood, and in front of City Hall. He said that covered this past fiscal year from October to December. About a mile of new paths had been added. Those were the Panasonic path, which he said should help with Air Show traffic that weekend.

Prebor asked Police Chief Janet Moon if there would be officers at that intersection and was told there would not be.

The other paths were from Crestwood to Kennerly along Robinson Road and an extension along Robinson Road to the entrance of Oakdale with a striped crosswalk.

He showed the amount of parking lot paving City crews had done by converting the square footage to miles. There were .3 miles for the Police Department expansion, 1.4 at the Glenloch Soccer Fields, and .37 at Riley Field. This totaled 2.07 miles.

All the paving came to about 8.5 miles, and they might be able to do another 1.5 miles this year, depending on several factors, including weather and additional projects, such as demolition of the Riley Track.

The awarded bid for street paving was a little shy of \$6 million, Miller said, for 14.75 miles of paving. As of now, 17.79 miles had been completed, with Riley Parkway, Aberdeen Parkway, Dover Place, and Dover Trail added. This was about evenly split between full-depth reclamation (FDR) and mill/overlay. The invoice to date was \$5.6 million, so they were under what was awarded, and it was estimated that they would finish the year either at or under the bid amount.

The Mayor asked what mill/overlay meant? Miller replied that it was when they took a layer off the road and repaved it. There might be some patching that also was categorized as mill/overlay, even if it was deeper, he stated.

Council thanked him for a good job, and Prebor asked how they were doing? He recalled that 10 years ago, they were way behind. Miller said he felt they were doing well in terms of catching up. The new Infrastructure Management Services (IIMS) study was coming in soon, and they would know more about the condition of the roads when they got the ratings numbers.

Destadio related the process he observed when his neighborhood streets were repaved and asked how long they had been using it? Miller said they were using that process when he arrived, but he had written the specs for the FDR when he was with the DOT in Tennessee and re-wrote them here for more quality control in order to get the correct cement mixture. Destadio said it seemed like a good process, and he would like to see the specs, and Miller said he could send them over.

Prebor then related that he was golfing with a friend and mentioned that he paid about \$87 in taxes a month to live in Peachtree City, which the friend found hard to believe. Prebor said he told him how to tell which taxes were City taxes and how to break things down. Now there was an online interactive tool to help homeowners figure out what they paid, and he thanked City Clerk Yasmin Julio. Prebor said he thought all the services and amenities he received for \$87 a month was a bargain. Destadio agreed this was a great thing.

Julio said she did not want to speak on the numbers because that Finance's domain, but on the public communications side, they had created some interactive pie charts as well as a table where people could see this information. It was on social media. There was a city property tax calculator that enabled residents to go online and feed in their property values to determine how much city tax they would pay.

They were also making changes to the senior homestead tax exemption. Currently, homeowners had to submit a form by February 1 saying that they would like to qualify. By April 1, they had to come back

and provide the documentation. Now they had consolidated this process so that people who wanted the \$5,000 exemption on city taxes would come to City Hall or go online before April 1 with their property tax information, their driver's license, and a completed application. They no longer had to come twice.

Learnard said she got questions all the time about progress at the Laurel Brooke development off SR 54 at Petrol Point and also the townhomes near Meade Field. She asked Planning and Development Director Robin Cailloux for an update.

Laurel Brooke was finishing up 10 live/work units, Cailloux said, and next would be putting in roads, single-family homes, and one larger office building of about 5,000 square feet. Learnard asked who the developer was? Feller Construction, Cailloux replied, but they were selling the lots to individual builders. Redwood was one builder; McKinney was another. The Mayor asked about the numbers, and Cailloux said she believed there would be 23 single-family homes and two condo buildings with 12 units each. The first condo building was in the process of being permitted, if it had not already been issued.

On the southside near Meade Fields would be 33 townhomes that were approved with the Somerby rezoning in 2010. They were required to put in extra landscaping between the driveway and their property.

Destadio recalled they were trying to get a berm put in as an additional buffer, and Cailloux said that was in the front, and they were doing what they could, but there were overhead utility wires to consider. It might not be as wide a berm as they wanted.

This was a Brent Scarbrough development, Cailloux said, and they, too, typically did the development and someone else did the building, but she did not know who that would be.

Somerby had tried to find who was doing the elevations, Destadio said, adding that right now, Scarbrough was doing all the horizontal stuff.

Also in that general area, Cailloux continued, was Mill Farms, a 74-lot single-family subdivision with house sizes and price points similar to The Gates.

There was also a lot of industrial construction going on, she added, with several existing companies expanding their operations, including Aventure Aviation, a homegrown company that was more than doubling in size. Some international headquarters were also increasing their headcounts. Other projects were in the works.

King moved to adjourn to executive session at 7:36 p.m. to discuss pending or threatened litigation. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

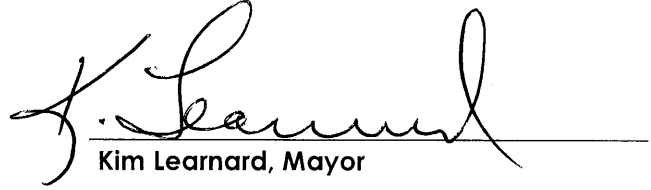
Prebor moved to reconvene in regular session at 7:52 p.m. Destadio seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.



Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Kim Learnard, Mayor