

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Danny Dunagan, Ruth Bruner, George Wangemann,
Sam Couvillon, Zack Thompson, Barbara Brooks
STAFF PRESENT: Bryan Lackey, Angela Sheppard, Denise Jordan

Mayor Dunagan called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and served as the presiding officer.

City Manager Lackey addressed some housekeeping matters and called attention to using the tablets for the first time during the retreat for efficiency purposes.

Upon inquiry from Council Member Couvillon, there was a brief update on the Ahaluna Drive issues with the notation that staff would continue to monitor the area and address other concerns as needed.

CITY VISION/MISSION:

City Manager Bryan Lackey reviewed the six step process for developing goals and discussed plans for regular meetings with finance and department directors.

The vision statement was presented as follows: Gainesville is committed to being an innovative city, providing a close-knit community feel in which to live, work and play. The school board's request to incorporate "learn" into the statement had been noted.

The mission statement was presented as follows: The mission of the City of Gainesville is to enrich the community of Gainesville by practicing good stewardship of resources and providing innovative and exemplary services for all people.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

There was discussion about the five strategic priorities, i.e., economic development, infrastructure improvements, internal operations, leisure services and quality of life, along with a brief review of pending projects associated with each. The following ideas/thoughts were presented as additions to the strategic priorities:

- Include downtown development in the economic development strategic priorities
- Address cultural differences
- Increase enforcement focused on litter and slum lords
- Public/Private partnerships – Example: Cargill
- Pause from discussing stormwater to reflect on comments and to redefine the details
- Provide consistent code enforcement services
- Implement code enforcement sweeps

Council Member Brooks commented on two empty lots that are not being maintained on Summit Street.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Assistant City Manager Sheppard presented the goals and objectives from for the Community Development and the Public Works Departments. She also discussed their performance indicators for the last three years.

FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Chief Financial Officer Melody Marlowe provided a financial update that focused on the General Fund. She used charts and graphs to compare the different revenue sources and expenditure information from Fiscal Year 2007 to Fiscal Year 2016. The following comments were noted.

- Council Member Wangemann expressed a desire for better Local Option Sales Tax negotiations. Assistant City Manager Sheppard summarized the most recent negotiation process.
- Fines and Forfeiture Revenue decreased due to (1) legislative changes related to illegal immigrants and (2) the recession.
- Gainesville may be one of the first communities in Georgia to reach pre-recession revenue in regards to permits and zoning fees.
- The Hotel/Motel Tax Revenue history displayed a success story for the city.
- The changes in General Fund Operating Expenditures for general government and public safety were directly related to transfers to other funds.
- There was discussion about the impact of the recession on the General Fund Transfers to Other Funds in that capital projects were cut from the budget with emphasis on the fact that some needs had not been addressed.

Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Review

Chief Financial Officer Melody Marlowe reviewed the fund balance projections for June 30, 2016. Almost \$3.8 million would be available for the Fiscal Year 2017 budget to address one time purchases, i.e., capital purchases.

RECESS: 10:45 AM
RECONVENE: 10:59 AM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

Permitting and Construction

Planning Manager Matt Tate reviewed the volume of work compared to staffing levels. He provided an update on the following commercial developments: New Holland Market, North Lake Square, MHC Kenworth, Over the Hill Assisted Living Facility. He also provided updates on the following future developments: Trees of Gainesville, Mundy Mill Elementary School, The Cottages on Enota and Walton Summit. He closed by stating staff would be working on the Unified Land Development Code update soon and would be seeking input from the governing body.

Downtown Streetscaping

Community Development Director Rusty Ligon provided an update on the downtown streetscaping project. He specifically discussed Washington Street, Bradford Street and “the Moat” (E.E. Butler Parkway and Spring Street, Jesse Jewell Parkway and Bradford Street).

There was discussion about the priority for this work with a notation that projects receiving Georgia Department of Transportation funding would take longer to complete.

Housing Initiatives

Community Development Director Rusty Ligon discussed initiatives addressed by the Housing Manager noting some were action items, code enforcement matters and/or activities through third party entities such as CDBG & CHIP. He discussed Atlanta Street Homes Redevelopment Walton Summit. He also discussed public housing in general.

Downtown Strategic Plan

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar provided a brief background and shared the recommendations for connectivity, programming, design and economic development.

Midtown Gainesville

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar provided a thorough review of this project. Two phases had been planned. Future phases would be needed to increase connectivity. Discussions were pending with CSX.

Land Bank Authority

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated this Authority would be an economic development tool to address slum and blight. The department worked with the city attorney to draft an ordinance. There were some items that require direction from the governing body.

COMMUNITY SERVICES:

Community Service Center Director Phillippa Lewis Moss reviewed accomplishments related to senior services, public transit and coordinating efforts to address homelessness. She commented on population changes since 2001. Projections to 2020 indicated Gainesville will be a large urban area which increases funding opportunities.

There was discussion about the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funding for a new Senior Life Center and the following next steps to move forward on this project:

1. Request the release of 10% of SPLOST funds (\$150,000)
2. Select a construction manager
3. Develop the engineering plan and cost estimate
4. Fill the gap between \$1.5 million in SPLOST funds and the cost estimate

Mrs. Moss commented on the state’s commitment to provide funding for transit programs noting this had never happened. She also commented on the changes in traffic patterns since 1996 implying this will impact commutes to Gainesville.

In closing, Mrs. Moss shared facts about homelessness indicating Hall County agreed to create a database of homeless service providers.

NOTE: Council Member George Wangemann left at 12:34 PM and did not return.

RECESS: 12:34 PM

RECONVENE: 1:10 PM

HUMAN RESOURCES:

Human Resources Director Janeann Allison stated the 2015 Pay Study revealed the city's minimum pay was behind the market approximately 7.7%. There was a decision to proceed with implementing the recommendations from the study with a varied width of pay ranges. She discussed how the new pay structure was designed and the implementation schedule. Mrs. Allison discussed the impact to the Fiscal Year 2017 budget and closed by emphasizing the fact that full implementation meant salaries would be three years behind the market.

Council Member Thompson confirmed the study was on market salary and did not include merit increases.

In closing, Mrs. Allison expressed a need for additional funds for citywide training as well as professional development for the Human Resources Department staff.

Mayor Danny Dunagan expressed a desire to increase the retirement age to 65 or 66, excluding public safety employees.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Public Works Director David Dockery shared some facts about the department. He commented on the 2015 winter storms and the cleanup responsibilities of the department noting the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursed some of the cost.

Mr. Dockery discussed street resurfacing responsibilities and showed before/after photos of some work that had occurred. There was a brief discussion about the Pavement Repair Diagram which outlined the numerous steps involved in paving projects. He also discussed the department's involvement in developing/implementing the Transportation Master Plan. Three themes were identified during the master plan process: (1) lack of east to west connectivity, (2) congested areas and (3) the need for efficient routes to I-985.

Mr. Dockery commented on daily operations by sharing statistical information. He also discussed achievements such as the cemetery garden, a tree removal project at the airport and addressed a storm water management issue at the airport. He closed by providing an overview of current projects.

Council Member Sam Couvillon commented on a concern among pilots regarding fuel prices which had been expressed to the Fixed Base Operator (FBO).

RECESS: 1:55 PM

RECONVENE: 2:11 PM

NEEDS/FUTURE DIRECTION FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

City Manager Lackey stated several departments were not scheduled to present information. He proceeded to discuss the needs of the Fire Department, Police Department, Chattahoochee Golf Course, Parks and Recreation Agency, Communications & Tourism Department and the City Manager's Office. The following comments were noted from the governing body:

- Determine if the time has come to increase green fees at the golf course.
- Revisit the Holly Park sublease.
- Determine the location of way finding signage.
- Improve or remove the historic signs on Green Street.
- Demolish the old jail.
- Develop renovation plans for the administration building.
- Prepare for the comprehensive plan update.
- Receive community input regarding economic development
- Create a Community Improvement District (CID) or Business Improvement District (BID) in the downtown area.
- Consider the possibility of providing or outsourcing medical transport services
- Improve crosswalk maintenance during the summer months
- Expedite the Senior Center project

MAYOR/COUNCIL FEEDBACK:

Mayor Danny Dunagan thanked the staff for making Gainesville the best city.

ADJOURNMENT: 2:59 PM

/dj

C. Danny Dunagan, Jr., Mayor

Denise O. Jordan, City Clerk