

Sandy Springs City Council Retreat was held on Tuesday, January 22, 2019, at 8:00 a.m., Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

Mayor Rusty Paul called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Councilmembers and Staff in attendance

Mayor: Mayor Rusty Paul present.

Councilmembers: Council Member John Paulson, Council Member Steve Soteres, Council Member Chris Burnett, Council Member Jody Reichel, Council Member Tibby DeJulio, and Council Member Andy Bauman were present.

Staff and other individuals in attendance: City Manager John McDonough, Assistant City Manager Jim Tolbert, Assistant to the City Manager Kristin Byars, Director of Public Works Marty Martin, Communications Director Sharon Kraun, Director of Community Development Ginger Sottile, Director of Economic Development Andrea Worthy, Finance Director Karen Ellis, Staff Attorney Kathy Williams, Facilities Director Dave Wells, Recreation and Parks Director Michael Perry, Human Resources Director Carol Sicard, Police Chief Ken DeSimone, Fire Chief Keith Sanders, and Assistant City Clerk Kelly Bogner

The City Council received presentations from staff and participated in broad ranging discussions on many subjects. The presentations are posted with the retreat agenda and materials on the City website.

City Manager John McDonough provided an overview of the retreat agenda.

1. **19-031** Review of Adopted Priorities - John McDonough

City Manager John McDonough introduced the PowerPoint presentation on City Council Adopted Priorities.

- Customer Service – Sharon Kraun

Director of Communications Sharon Kraun presented the Customer Service portion of the presentation.

Council Member John Paulson stated that 13% usage of e-plan review seems like we are way behind the curve. He asked why we do not have a higher percentage. He asked if the customers are not utilizing the system or if we are not quite set up for it, yet.

Director of Communications Kraun stated it is a combination of both. The system is not equipped with certain tools, which is why staff is looking at other software.

Council Member Chris Burnett asked how many households currently receive the e-newsletter.

Director of Communications Kraun stated approximately 10,000 households receive the newsletter.

Council Member Burnett asked if Council can send Communications staff their database of emails, so they can be integrated into the distribution as well.

Director of Communications Kraun stated the newsletter is an opt-in system. The system requires the individual to give the City permission to send the newsletter. She encourages Council to relay to their constituents to opt-in to the City's newsletter. The only other time the City issues that list is for emergencies or for things that are a high priority for Council.

Mayor Rusty Paul asked what assistance the Council can give in promoting things on social media networks like Nextdoor.

Director of Communications Kraun stated one way that Council can help through their constituents is by sharing information posted on the City's social media sites. If there is information regarding public safety, staff works with the Police Department, which does have access to the City's social media sites.

- Public Safety - Ken DeSimone / Keith Sanders

Police Chief Ken DeSimone presented the Police Department portion of the Public Safety presentation.

Council Member Burnett asked if there is any particular section of the City where surface street accidents are more prevalent than others.

Police Chief DeSimone responded not really. Roswell Road and Lake Forrest are streets where accidents often occur.

Council Member Andy Bauman asked for an update regarding License Plate Readers (LPRs). He asked if Council needs to take any action in the coming year for City resources. He has had this topic come up in neighborhood meetings. He asked if the City needs to do anything from a camera policy standpoint to enable more LPRs in our communities.

Police Chief DeSimone stated there is a company called FLOCK that is doing a lot of neighborhood License Plate Reader Automated (LPRA) cameras. It is a pretty good system. The neighborhoods manage the cameras, so the local police department does not have to get involved. The police department does not maintain the cameras or do anything administratively. If there is a crime in the neighborhood, then the police department can access that information.

Council Member Bauman asked about the City of Brookhaven recently investing in LPRs.

City Manager McDonough stated he believes they are pleased with the LPRs.

Police Chief DeSimone stated the FLOCK LPRAs are for neighborhoods when the vehicle speed is below 45 m.p.h.

Council Member Tibby DeJulio asked if the residents have to go through a process with the City to install cameras in their neighborhoods.

Police Chief DeSimone stated the neighborhoods do. Some communities in the City already have the cameras installed.

Council Member DeJulio stated maybe we should make it easier for neighborhoods to install these cameras.

City Attorney Dan Lee stated staff has been reviewing the neighborhood camera policy issues. There have been open records requests for neighborhood cameras that are not affiliated with the City. The

Legal Department is leaning towards recommending letting the cameras be a neighborhood issue. The City will not have access to the cameras unless it is given to the Public Safety department. The same thing would be true about the City's right-of-way. There are many entities that want to use the right-of-way for cameras, many times without permission. It would be problematic to have a City policy that allowed a neighborhood to use the right-of-way, but required a utility company to request approval from the City.

City Manager McDonough stated the City's policy addresses cameras in the right-of-way. The cameras are allowed on private property. Staff will research how many neighborhood camera applications the City has received.

Director of Community Development Ginger Sottile stated staff has received a couple of inquiries. Staff decided that if a camera is to be located on private property, the requester could install the camera. The City is not ready to permit any cameras located in the right-of-way.

Council Member Bauman stated the cameras should be a topic of discussion for the south end of the City, due to the recent crime activities. The City should review what resources could be committed toward LPRs and traffic light cameras.

City Manager McDonough stated staff will bring this item back to Council at a Work Session meeting in April.

Council Member Burnett asked if the speeding signs that display current speed are effective.

Police Chief DeSimone responded probably not.

Council Member Burnett stated he wonders if the City could double the speeding fines in a pedestrian protected zone. We are trying to create a walkable City. In certain areas of City Springs people drive over the speed limit. It discourages people from walking or riding a bicycle.

Fire Chief Keith Sanders presented the Fire Department portion of the Public Safety presentation.

Council Member DeJulio asked if new apartment owners are notified regarding the intumescent paint requirement.

Fire Chief Sanders stated staff notifies the new property owners and works with them as they move forward with that process.

Council Member Paulson asked if the water tower property on Jett Ferry Road is large enough for City use.

Fire Chief Sanders stated that property is not available now. Should the City acquire the water system, then it becomes a part of that. It is worth looking at the property.

City Manager McDonough presented the Public Safety 2019 Priorities slide from the presentation.

- Community Appearance – Kristin Byars

Assistant to the City Manager Kristin Byars gave a PowerPoint presentation on Community Appearance.

- Sustainable Growth - Jim Tolbert

Assistant City Manager Jim Tolbert gave a PowerPoint presentation on Sustainable Growth.

Council Member Paulson stated he attended training last summer pertaining to smart cities and technology. He is sure the City has implemented smart technology. He would like to see at a Work Session what smart technology the City is utilizing.

City Manager McDonough stated the City has an internal working committee that reviews a list of potential technologies and initiatives. The committee meets regularly to evaluate the list and make recommendations on what the City should explore further. He can update Council on this in the first or second quarter of the year.

- Natural Resource Protection – Kristin Byars

Assistant to the City Manager Kristin Byars gave a PowerPoint presentation on Natural Resource Protection.

Mayor Paul stated many people are not aware of the City's stream buffer requirements. He asked if there is any public education effort that staff has contemplated to help people understand what the requirements are and why buffers are important.

Assistant City Manager Tolbert stated staff has posted this information on the City website. Staff will first be educated about stream buffers and then open it up to community education.

Council Member Bauman asked if our City utilizes citizen volunteers for creek water testing.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars stated she does not think the City has been doing that, but it is certainly something that can be considered.

Council Member Burnett asked if staff has seen an improvement since the installation of the Marsh Creek basin.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars stated she does not have that data, but staff can gather that information and report back to Council.

Council Member Bauman complimented staff on dedicating time to these resources. He would like to see some branding of successes where trees have been planted communicated to the public. He asked if there is an ability to plot out where new trees have been planted. Those areas where significant tree plantings have occurred should be promoted on the City webpage.

Council Member Paulson asked about the tree canopy assessment.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars stated staff is currently working on a pilot program at Hammond Park and Abernathy Greenway for the canopy assessments in order to get recommendations on maintenance plans and where we may be able to plant new trees.

Council Member DeJulio stated trees that are a hazard in the right-of-way can affect the citizens.

- Transportation – Marty Martin

Director of Public Works Marty Martin gave a PowerPoint presentation on Transportation.

Mayor Paul asked the status of the Glenridge project.

Director of Public Works Martin stated the bids have been received and are with GDOT.

Council Member DeJulio asked how long will it take for GDOT to award the bid.

Director of Public Works Martin stated he anticipates the project will be underway in sixty days. There may be utility relocations before construction begins.

Council Member Bauman asked how many neighborhoods are implementing traffic calming.

Director of Public Works Martin stated there are about nine active neighborhoods that have traffic calming.

Council Member Bauman stated there should be some objective standards where traffic calming is City initiated.

Director of Public Works Martin stated there are speed feedback signs along Johnson Ferry Road.

City Manager McDonough stated it is up to the neighborhoods whether or not traffic calming is installed. Quite often the support is not there to implement traffic calming.

- Recreation & Cultural Enhancement – Michael Perry

Director of Recreation and Parks Michael Perry gave a PowerPoint presentation on Recreation & Cultural Enhancement.

City Manager McDonough stated at the next City Council meeting there will be an update on the Phase I project at Hammond.

Council Member DeJulio asked if the City has ever considered installing a kitchen at Lost Corners. It would increase the usability and the number of people who use the facility.

City Manager McDonough stated when the facility was renovated, installing a kitchen was a budget issue. There is an area where a kitchen can be installed. We have always planned on installing a kitchen, but just have not got around to it, yet. Staff can review the options of installing a kitchen.

City Manager McDonough stated as Council knows, the City and Spectra have worked together for approximately two years, from inception of the City Springs entertainment and meeting facilities through completion. Spectra has served as General Manager of the facilities pursuant to a contract covering pre-opening and post-opening management services. During that time, we have identified duplication of services provided, specifically in the areas of facilities management, marketing and accounting. After extensive discussions, the City and Spectra have mutually decided on a transition of services for the facilities from Spectra to the City. After transition, the City will assume full management of operations of the facilities, with Spectra concluding its work on February 3. The transition provides an opportunity for the City to incorporate some of the duplicated duties into current City Departments, creating more efficiencies in management of the facilities. An executive search firm specializing in the venue entertainment industry has been engaged to help us identify a Director of Venue Operations, who will oversee general operations. We have offered a majority of the current staff members the option to

continue working for the venue, and hope to retain that team. The City and Spectra are committed to a smooth transition. Organizations that have booked the facilities should expect to receive a high level of service going forward.

Council Member Paulson stated it has been suggested that the triangle park area be constructed into a Veterans Park. He would like staff to review examples of other Veterans Parks to get ideas for a park here in the City.

Council Member Bauman stated he loves the idea of the City having an outdoor ice skating rink. He would like staff to look at this as an option. He would also like to see the outdoor concerts grow.

There was a five minute break at this time.

- Economic Development - Andrea Worthy

Director of Economic Development Andrea Worthy gave a PowerPoint presentation on Economic Development.

- Downtown Development – Marty Martin/Andrea Worthy

Director of Public Works Marty Martin gave a PowerPoint presentation on Downtown Development.

Council Member Jody Reichel asked if the green City lights could be installed in neighborhoods by the HOAs.

Director of Public Works Martin stated that has not been done as a Public Works effort. Some neighborhoods do have privately funded and installed lighting.

Council Member Reichel asked if the neighborhoods can receive the City pricing.

Director of Public Works Martin stated staff can look into this.

- Water Reliability – Dan Lee

City Attorney Lee gave a PowerPoint presentation on Water Reliability.

Mayor Paul stated meetings were held with the City of Atlanta Council President and the Chairman of the Utilities Committee.

Council Member Paulson stated he is not opposed to suspending the lawsuit, with the provision that if the City of Atlanta decides not to cooperate, then Sandy Springs can move forward with the lawsuit.

Council Member Burnett asked if the City of Atlanta provides water to any other jurisdictions.

Mayor Paul responded the City of College Park and parts of unincorporated Fulton County.

City Attorney Lee stated there are also several wholesale customers such as Coweta County, DeKalb County, and Fayette County.

Council Member Burnett asked how the Sandy Springs rates compare to other cities.

City Attorney Lee stated our rates are the highest in the State. The second highest rates are for City of Atlanta customers.

There was a fifteen minute lunch break at this time.

2. **19-032** North End Revitalization Taskforce – Andrea Worthy, Director of Economic Development

Director of Economic Development Andrea Worthy began the North End Revitalization Task Force PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Reichel stated her concern is the area between Abernathy and the North River shopping center.

Mayor Paul stated the target area for the Task Force is from Dalrymple to the north.

3. **19-033** **GDOT Update: Managed Lanes – Tim Matthews, GDOT**

Tim Matthews, GDOT, gave the GDOT Update on Managed Lanes PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Bauman asked about the style of the meetings.

Mr. Matthews stated this style of meeting is the typical Public Information Open House (PIOH) format where layouts and drawings of the corridor are provided.

Council Member Paulson asked if any thought has been given to stacking the express lanes.

Mr. Matthews stated his staff has not considered that. The main reason why is because GDOT is trying to utilize and keep as much of the existing infrastructure as possible. Looking at what that would take, his staff does not believe it to be a feasible option to explore.

Council Member Burnett asked if a decision has been made on how many entry and exit points will be along I-285.

Mr. Matthews stated this information will be advertised at the public information meeting and will show exactly where the access points will be located.

Director of Public Works Marty Martin presented the Mount Vernon access portion of the presentation.

Mr. Matthews continued with the presentation.

Council Member Burnett asked if GDOT is saying the \$59 million for Mount Vernon is in the budget and the \$80 million for Crestline is not, so the City will have to make up the difference.

Mr. Matthews responded yes, or it will have to come from some other source of revenue.

Mayor Paul stated Governor Deal gave GDOT an assignment and attached a certain amount of money to that assignment. They are required to complete all that the Governor charged them to do with that particular amount of money. If the City wants to present the Crestline project to the public, then the City and its partners will have to figure out the \$23 to \$29 million to fund the project. If a majority of the

public states they want this at Mount Vernon, then we will not need to pay the \$29 million. If they want the project located elsewhere, then GDOT looks to the City to figure out how to pay for the project.

Council Member Paulson stated he can present the project better if he knows the impacts to the intersections.

City Manager McDonough stated staff will need to complete the impact analysis first, so that Council will have the information necessary to make a decision.

Mayor Paul stated the residential communities would be less affected by the Crestline option. If we support the project, then we will need to find funding for it.

4. **19-034** 285 Top End Transit Feasibility Study – Eric Bosman, Kimley-Horn/Todd Long, Moreland Altobeli

Eric Bosman, Kimley-Horn and Todd Long, Moreland Altobeli gave the I-285 Top End Transit Feasibility Study PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Bauman asked what the traffic numbers tell us. He is focused on how to get the commuters over the river.

Mr. Bosman stated commuters are trying to get to the Cumberland and Perimeter area. He asked how close the system would have to be to where people live for them to utilize the system.

Mayor Paul stated what needs to be determined is the feasibility of an east/west transit system. He asked how much it would cost and what are some of the tools that can be used to pay for it. The feasibility should be explored and the City would be remiss if we did not.

5. **19-035** MARTA Update – Benjamin Limmer, MARTA & Emily Ritzler, WSP

Benjamin Limmer, MARTA and Emily Ritzler, WSP, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the MARTA Update.

Mayor Paul stated most of the impact will be to the North Springs MARTA station. The design is to move people through the area and reduce congestion.

Council Member Paulson stated at one point there was a discussion about having a station at the Northridge road exit off GA400. He asked if that is no longer being considered.

Ms. Ritzler stated when reviewing the ridership numbers and how to incorporate that into the system, it is a complicated piece. It is not completely out of the question, but it is not the most viable option at this time.

Director of Economic Development Worthy resumed the North End Revitalization Taskforce PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Steve Soteres stated many staff members worked hours on this taskforce. We all learned the revitalization process will be complicated. The intention behind a catalyst project is to show the development community and the citizens that development can occur in the north end of the City. Task Force member Richard Munger, who is with North American Properties, discussed building a destination area for the City.

There was a ten minute break at this time.

6. **19-036** Phase II City Springs Redevelopment – John McDonough

City Manager John McDonough introduced the PowerPoint presentation on Phase II City Springs Redevelopment.

- 2012 City Center Master Plan – Kristin Smith
- City Center Master Plan Phase I Progress – Kristin Smith
- Heritage Master Plan – Jim Tolbert
- 2018 Sandy Springs Visitor Profile Study – Shannon Gray, Gray Research Solutions
- Hotel Feasibility Study – Andrea Worthy

Mayor Paul stated this topic is about constructing a hotel in City Springs that would serve this facility and improve business income for the restaurants in the area. The original master plan called for a hotel.

Council Member Burnett asked about the building height limit in the City Springs area.

Director of Economic Development Worthy responded she believes the maximum is six stories.

Council Member Paulson asked what the next step is.

Director of Economic Development Worthy stated staff will need to start speaking to developers and show them the numbers on potential revenues. There have been preliminary conversations with developers and they have expressed interest.

Mayor Paul stated we are trying to fulfill the rest of the master plan and create opportunities.

City Manager McDonough stated there are four to five acre parcels around City Springs which could be further developed.

7. **19-037** Recreation & Parks Master Plan – Michael Perry

Director of Recreation and Parks Michael Perry gave the Recreation and Parks Master Plan PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Burnett asked over what time frame the \$105 million for the Recreation and Parks Plan Funding will be spent.

Director of Recreation and Parks Perry responded over the next twenty years.

Recreation and Parks Master Plan Advisory Member, Ken Dishman, spoke briefly regarding the findings of the committee.

Council Member Burnett asked how much is typically budgeted each year for City parks.

City Manager McDonough stated he would have to go back and review those numbers. The amount ranges from several hundred thousand to the low seven figures. He does not believe there is a consistent number, as we have for intersection or sidewalk projects. The parks budget depends on the priorities at the time.

Council Member Paulson asked if staff has an inventory of the potential park properties that have been donated to the City.

City Manager McDonough stated this is the time for staff to review the current inventory.

Council Member Bauman asked about partnerships with the neighboring jurisdictions.

Mr. Dishman stated this is a multi-layer proposition that includes regional authorities, such as the Atlanta Regional Commission, that are actively bringing the communities together for other regional solutions to challenges, such as transportation.

Council Member Bauman stated he is sure the City's recreation and parks facilities serve citizens that do not live in the City. He wonders how the City can leverage the existing relationships. He requested the data on how many citizens the City serves from other communities at our recreation and parks facilities.

Mr. Dishman stated in order to pay for a project, the solution would ultimately have to be a public/private partnership. He has spoken to a few individuals on the YMCA Board of Directors that emphasized there is not only one formula for a YMCA facility. One possibility is for the building to be vertical. There are many ways to meet the need for this community resource here in the City.

There being no further discussion, the Retreat adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Date Approved: February 19, 2019


Russell K. Paul, Mayor


Coty Thigpen, City Clerk