

Work Session of the City of Sandy Springs Mayor and City Council held on February 2, 2006 at 7:00 PM Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.

Presentations

Call Center

Acting City Manager Aaron Bovos stated that there have been many meetings regarding the Call Center and staff is aware of the issues and complaints.

Director of Operations Don Howell stated that he knows the Call Center has been a disappointment lately and staff will make it work and make the necessary adjustments.

Mayor Galambos recognized Director of Business Systems John Abrera who came forward and presented the Mayor and Council with the proposed plan for the Call Center or what he calls the Citizen Response Center. He stated that a new phone system is being installed this week. He explained that there have been almost 5,600 calls into the center and of those 1,700 was in December and almost 4,000 in January. He explained that an answering service is also used to answer calls during peak call times, which is between 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny questioned what percentage of the calls is handled by the answering service. Director of Business Systems Abrera stated that he did not have that number. Acting City Manager Bovos stated that currently there is no system in place to manage the Call Center and gather that information.

Director of Business Systems Abrera explained that the answering service now has the ability to transfer calls which improves the customer service level. He reviewed the Call Center answering process.

The Action Plan for the Call Center.

- Modify how the Call Center answers and routes calls.
- Answering service can transfer calls.
- Check and test system for repairs more frequently.
- Citizens Responders will be retrained.
- Routing of receptionist calls.
- Quality control/quality assurance plan for the system and processes.
- Prepared to implement a dedicated line for Mayor and Council for quicker routing.

Future Enhancements to the Call Center.

- Provide additional venues for citizens to contact the city such as a web interface.
- Email updates on work orders.
- Voice interface used with work order or incident numbers
- Letter generation for those who do not have email.

Councilmember Jenkins asked for an organizational chart and stated that she had requests for email addresses. Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny concurred and stated that there should be a posted directory. Councilmember Fries stated that she thought the reason for the Call Center was so that a directory was not published. Acting City Manager Bovos stated that these issues have been discussed and are in conflict with the City's Charter, which is why the Call Center exists. He explained anything that does not go through the Call Center is not monitored for process or follow-up.

Mayor and City Council Discussion Items

Mayor Eva Galambos

Resolution to the Georgia Public Service Commission to emphasize that the utility franchise fees must be continued for the use of cities.

Mayor Galambos stated that this item came from Cobb County. The proposed change would force the citizens of the City of Sandy Springs, as well as other cities, to pay as much as 4% more for power than customers in unincorporated areas. She suggested passing a Resolution to the Georgia Public Safety Commission emphasizing that the use of franchise fees must be continued for the use of cities.

Sandy Springs PCID Board Nomination

Mayor Galambos stated that the bylaws for the PCID Board have changed and now requires a member to be appointed by the City. She stated that the PCID has recommended that the City appoint Adam Orkin to the Board. Councilmember Paul stated that he lives in Alpharetta. Mayor Galambos stated that she was only relaying the request from the PCID.

Acting City Manager Bovos stated that there is a belief that the nomination is made by the PCID and the City confirms it, but this is not what the bylaws state. The representative is appointed by the City. Discussion followed regarding the appointment to the PCID Board. City Attorney Wendell Willard stated that he would review the State law regarding the PCID and report to the Mayor and City Council. After reading the bylaws, there was a consensus that the appointee be a resident of Sandy Springs.

Local Assistant Grant

Mayor Galambos stated that she had received information regarding the Local State Assistance Grant. Police Chief Wilson stated that the funding could be used for vests or cameras for the patrol cars. Councilmember Paul stated that it would be best to request funding for safety such as vests. Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny suggested funds be used for "Welcome to Sandy Springs" signs or for crossing guards. City Attorney Willard stated that crossing guards are a recurring expense and therefore not eligible.

Dave Greenspan, District 1

Councilmember Greenspan updated the Mayor and Council on the use of the City's school facilities and amenities by the City. Discussion followed regarding the uses of the City's school facilities.

Dianne Fries, District 2

Community Involvement Program

(Proclamation protocol)

Councilmember Fries stated that she has had many requests for some type of Community Involvement or Outreach Program.

CH2MHILL Project Manager Rick Hirsekorn stated that he and the Acting City Manager met to discuss ideas on this issue. He requested that, at the pleasure of the Council, he be allowed to lead this program. He stated that the City Charter establishes this to be outside of the Council's government services and would be an extra program.

Community Outreach implies reaching out to provide services such as social services. He stated that these may already be provided by the County or non-profit agencies.

He further explained that Community Involvement means integration of citizen concerns and City services. Elected officials and staff participate in community-based organizations. Another avenue for community involvement is providing support for special events within the City, such as issuing a proclamation. He explained that major events which involve City resources are outside the scope of a Community Involvement Program. Proactive communication to the citizens through all the media vehicles is another way to keep the citizens involved.

The question is where the requests go. He questioned whether these requests should come to the Mayor and Council or to staff. During the first year they should come through the Mayor and Council and staff provides feedback on the events for the following years. He reviewed what his company's principles are toward community involvement.

Councilmember Paul stated that the goal is for Sandy Springs to become the most livable community in Georgia. He stated that there are many resources within the City and many large events that can unify this community. Discussion followed regarding the existing festivities within the City.

Mayor Galambos stated that there are many people who want to volunteer and there currently are not enough established boards for them. Councilmember Meinzen McEnery suggested that a staff position be created to facilitate these volunteers and find volunteer programs.

Rusty Paul, District 3

Creation of a Sandy Springs Neighborhood Watch Program

Councilmember Paul stated that he had been contacted by a subdivision who wanted to establish a Neighborhood Watch Program, but found that the only established program is through Fulton County. He requested a resolution be prepared to establish this for next Tuesday's meeting.

Creation of a Neighborhood Registry

Councilmember Paul stated that Sandy Springs neighbors have come to him and requested that a registry of neighborhoods be published on the City's website as a point of reference.

Video Poker in Convenience Stores and Related Enforcement Issues

Councilmember Paul stated that this has become a major problem. City Attorney Willard stated that something needed to be coordinated with Fulton County to investigate this.

Staff Discussion Items

Aaron Bovos, Deputy City Manager

Update on Fulton County Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA)

Fire, E-911, Parks

Acting City Manager Aaron Bovos updated the Mayor and Council on the intergovernmental agreements with Fulton County for Fire, E-911, and Parks services. He stated that Fulton County has turned down the City's request for a three year extension. He stated that the City has since requested an 18 month extension and performance based reporting. They are also requesting a quick response unit.

Acting City Manager Bovos stated that the County views the IGA for public safety as one agreement and does not separate fire, E911 and police. Discussion followed regarding the separation of these entities.

Acting City Manager Bovos stated that regarding the E911 IGA, Fulton County and the City of Atlanta want to merge their 911 centers, but we have not committed to that authority and if we do not that merge will not happen. He stated that they no longer want to dispatch ambulance services. He stated that the County is not willing to dispatch calls to our police. He explained that they would have to reprogram their terminals and this cost would come back to the City. The City is notifying the County of its plan to terminate Police services with them.

Acting City Manager Bovos stated that staff has made the requested changes: the revenue distribution from January 1 to February 1, the inclusion of Bulls Sluice, and clarification of ownership. He stated that this has been forwarded to the County. He explained that the County is unsure as to whether or not this must go back to the Commissioners for a vote.

Volunteer Program / Citizen Deputy

Acting City Manager Bovos stated that staff is extremely interested in a volunteer program. He stated that staff is looking into funding as well as ways to involve volunteers.

Al Crace, Assistant City Manager

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Policy and How We Evaluate What is Funded

Acting City Manager Bovos reviewed how the projects are evaluated for funding. The following capital improvements:

-
- Sidewalks-repair/replace and new
 - Speed limit
 - Paving and resurfacing
 - Street abandonment
 - Traffic signals and signs
 - Traffic calming

Mayor Galambos stated that some communities are contributing resources and they should be given some priority. Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated that traffic calming should be a priority as well.

Discussion followed regarding a policy for establishing priorities.

Assistant City Manager Al Crace explained the process for implementing a Capital Improvement Plan. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan is essential to this CIP. He reviewed the following components of the Capital Improvement Plan:

- Future Land Use Plan, a lighthouse for private investment in the community.
- Transportation Improvement Plan
- Sidewalk master plan
- Traffic improvement plan
- Parks master plan
- Police and Fire facilities plan
- General government facilities plan

The two major components of the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) are:

- Regional TIP program
- Local TIP program

City Attorney Discussion Items

Wendell Willard, City Attorney

City Attorney Willard gave the following update on the status of recent legislative request:

Resolution Requesting General Assembly to Amend the City's Charter by Extending Time period to Adopt a Comprehensive Plan.

City Attorney Willard stated that he would have to review this, but suggested that the City adopt their own Comprehensive Plan.

Resolution Supporting Legislation to Create Homestead Exemption for Residents of Sandy Springs.

City Attorney Willard stated that this has all passed the House and now in the Senate.

Resolution Supporting the Creation of a Public Facilities Authority and Legislation to facilitate the creation.

City Attorney Willard stated that this is in the House and should pass as local legislation.

Resolution in Support of House Bill 719 regarding maximum fines and fees imposed by Municipal Court.

City Attorney Willard stated that this should be through the House next week.

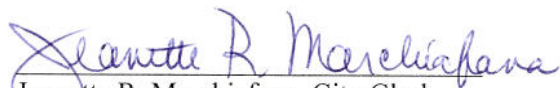
Resolution Requesting the General Assembly to establish the ability for private sector to have sovereign immunity & sales tax exemption status.

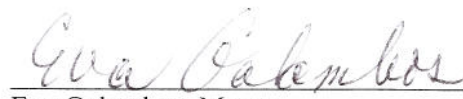
City Attorney Willard stated that this is a troublesome area. He explained that the exemption of Sales and Use Tax might apply to other contractors as well and could cost the State millions of dollars. He stated that he will talk to the Revenue Department and explained that the Sovereign Immunity issue is probably not possible. The City would need to get underwriters to recognize that the risk is not there.

City Attorney Willard gave an update of the Millage rate and Local Option Sales Tax. He explained that the City must show that without the LOST tax being paid to us, the City's millage rate would be much higher. City Attorney Willard explained that the resolution should show this comparison. Acting City Manager Bovos explained that when the LOST was established it was based on municipalities rolling back their millage rate an equivalent percentage to the LOST amount received.

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Date Approved: March 21, 2006


Jeanette R. Marchiafava, City Clerk


Eva Galambos, Mayor

