

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, May 3, 2011, at 7:16 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Recreation and Parks

1. Discussion on Reallocation of Unused CIP Funds to Other Projects

Finance Director Amy Davis stated this item is a request for a budget transfer from specific CIP projects with unused funds to other CIP projects that need extra funds. Included in the unused funds list is the gymnastics facility. This budget item would be reduced by \$500,000. There is also a recreation equipment fund that was never used in the amount of \$8,359. The Morgan Falls Park Improvement fund would be reduced by \$519,000 and pavement management by \$72,000. The total of these amounts would be applied towards Astro turf at a school's athletic field, Heritage Bluestone for \$100,000, Overlook Park for \$100,000, and Hammond Park for \$300,000.

City Manager John McDonough stated these are existing funds in the CIP. Staff is recommending reallocating these funds in the current fiscal year, not as part of the FY2012 budget process. The CIP funds were unused for a variety of reasons.

Councilmember Dianne Fries asked why these projects do not fall in the normal budget list.

City Manager McDonough stated staff has not gone back in prior years and reallocated CIP funds. It has taken years to get to this point. It is now at the point where projects have come to a conclusion and money has not been spent. Rather than go through this in the budget process, there are funds that are available now that can be deployed for other priority projects within the current fiscal year. To address current needs in the Recreation and Parks Department, it has been worked out with the Finance Department to reallocate the funds

Director of Recreation and Parks Ronnie Young stated the Astro turf project at a cost of \$600,000 would allow the City to partner in an IGA to Astro turf a field area on one of the public schools within the City limits. The City would in turn share this field with the school.

Mayor Eva Galambos asked if it would be one school.

Director Recreation and Parks Young responded yes. He is considering the Sandy Springs Middle School and the Dunwoody Elementary School. Both of the schools have areas of sufficient size to have a full field layout for football, soccer, kickball, and lacrosse. The elementary school is the least used field and he thinks this would be the best location for the new Astro turf. This would enable the Recreation and Parks Department to use the field for additional youth sports programs and special events. This space would allow the City to provide for associations and nonprofit organizations in the community. Some of them already have various teams organized and are in desperate need for a place to play. The Astro turf at Hammond has been a great plus for the City. There are all day rentals on Saturday and Sunday with the exception of a few hours held for free play.

Mayor Galambos asked if the new Astro turf would be on a field that is currently being used or a new additional field that has not been used.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated it would be a current athletic playing field. He would prefer to obtain space at an elementary school that is not being used that often. If the middle school is selected, there are more activities held there, which would allow the City less use of the field.

Mayor Galambos asked if the City has a current IGA regarding the use of the Dunwoody Springs School.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young responded no. He spoke with the school principal within the past two months and explained what programs the City can offer on the school grounds. He has not mentioned to the principal the possibility of the Astroturf, just that the City could upgrade the field and maintain it.

Mayor Galambos stated IGA's usually include maintenance for the fields. Will the City be required to pay for the maintenance of the Astroturf?

Director of Recreation and Parks Young responded no. The terminology in the IGA would be different. There would be use of the field for ten to fifteen years and no other costs or commitments.

Mayor Galambos asked if the City would save money.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young responded yes.

Councilmember Gabriel Sterling asked if a regular field can be used.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young responded yes.

Councilmember Fries stated the winter season is an issue with a regular field.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated there is year round use of an Astroturf field. There is not watering of the field, fertilization, and grass cutting.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny stated the Astroturf at Hammond Park came about due to a complaint from a resident. The resident was upset that the field at Hammond Park had to shut down between October and March so the grass could grow back. There is one all-weather playing field in all of Sandy Springs. She sees the need for another such playing field and she supports it. The sum of money that is being allocated for this is larger than the \$500,000 for the Hammond field.

Councilmember John Paulson stated what is being done here is taking money that was going to go to another park project and moving the money within the Recreation and Parks Department.

City Manager McDonough stated staff has discussed the issue internally and felt it would be appropriate to bring this forward to Council based on Department's needs. It is a well thought out program and a good reallocation of funds for quality of life issues and recreation.

Councilmember Chip Collins stated the alternative is the money could carry over to the next year's budget.

City Manager McDonough responded yes, the money could be carried over to next year.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked if Heritage Bluestone is having a cost overrun.

City Manager McDonough responded yes. The extra cost is primarily due to water intrusion in the basement. The condition was not foreseeable until the walls were removed.

Mayor Galambos asked if these issues could have been anticipated by the designers and architects.

Councilmember DeJulio stated the City spent \$450,000 on the design of the building.

City Manager McDonough stated the cost that has been paid and the current water intrusion problem has been argued with the construction management. At this point in time, this will be an appropriate expenditure.

Councilmember DeJulio asked what else is going to be done at Overlook Park.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated staff is looking at placing sail shades over the two large pieces of playground equipment, so the sun will be off of the children. The cost for the shades will be around \$65,000 to \$70,000. There is also invasive work to be done.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny asked if it is possible to plant trees near the playground that will eventually grow large enough to provide the shade. Planting two trees could be a long term solution, instead of replacing the shades in five years.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated staff was looking at a second gym to expand the gymnastics program, but conditions have changed, so that solution is no longer being pursued.

Mayor Galambos asked if the City still has an agreement for use of the Hitson Center.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated the City has an MOU that is for one year. The Hitson Center is now being used for day camps this summer, as well as rental space for the community.

Mayor Galambos asked if the Hitson Center parlor will be available for rental.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young answered yes, the parlor is available now for rental.

Mayor Galambos asked if there has been further discussion regarding the connection of the trails at Overlook Park.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young replied there has not been further discussion since he last spoke to the Mayor about the right-of-way.

Mayor Galambos stated once staff contacts the property owners, she will meet with the owners.

City Attorney Wendell Willard stated in previous years he has spoken with the property owners and tried getting easements for that, but was not successful.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated he will get that information to the Mayor.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated a lot of money has been spent on Hammond Park in the last five years.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated the money allocated for Hammond Park would be used for additional parking spaces. There are approximately 1,000 children in the gymnastics program, two to

three hundred children using the sports field, fifty children on the basketball courts, and many children on the playground in the summertime. The money would be used for a design contract for about sixty-five additional parking spots that would be located off each side of the entrance drive.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny asked if this plan will be removing green space.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated it will be mostly the removal of pine trees.

Mayor Galambos asked if the \$300,000 is the cost for just the design.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young responded no. The contract bids have already been received at a cost of \$20,000. Staff would also like to construct a 60 X 40 building to house the Recreation Department vans and trucks.

Mayor Galambos asked if the building would be visible. Could staff purchase a readymade building?

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated the building would be mostly out of view.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny asked if the new parking spaces could be a pervious surface.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated the new parking spaces can be gravel like or a pervious surface. There will also be additional erosion control where water is running down on the turf field. All the toilets and sinks in the parks are being replaced with low flow automatic operation models.

Councilmember Fries asked that gravel not be used for the new parking spaces, because it dings up cars and is a nuisance. The pervious surface at Overlook Park works just fine.

Mayor Galambos stated a model of how green space can be preserved is Callaway Gardens.

Councilmember Fries stated there is a need for active parks in the City.

Councilmember Sterling stated since he has been a member of Council he has had more calls from citizens requesting additional parking spaces at Hammond Park than for anything else.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny suggested considering a low rise parking deck.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with this item.

City Clerk

1. Discussion on City Council Agenda Packet Distribution

City Clerk Michael Casey stated for the past few years the City Council agenda packets have been delivered via compact discs. The master documents that are generated for the regular meeting and the work session are first burned to a master disc. The master disc is then duplicated and distributed to Mayor, Council, and senior staff. There is a fair amount of time and cost involved for the materials and for duplicating the compact discs. There is also expense for delivering the discs both inside and outside of City Hall. He proposed a solution of eliminating the use of compact discs by uploading the master documents to a web page. A link to the web page will be provided to Council and staff. In order to obtain the agenda and master documents for a meeting, Councilmembers can simply click the link and download the master documents to their computers for use at the next meeting.

Councilmember Chip Collins asked how this process is different from how he can currently go to the City website and view the documents.

City Clerk Casey stated the documents that are posted on the website require each agenda item to be opened and downloaded separately.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio thanked the City Clerk for this brilliant idea. He stated if he does not have his CD with him, he will sometimes go online to look at the agenda documents.

Councilmember John Paulson stated there may be a time factor in downloading the larger master document files.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny stated she believes that the link provided to the Mayor, Council, and senior staff should be available online to the public. What she receives on her disc is sometimes not on the City website. She asked if staff can print a color zoning map for her when she needs one.

City Clerk Casey stated he is not proposing any change in methodology for the Board or Commission meetings for which she receives paper packets. He is only proposing to change how the City Council Meeting documents are delivered. Part of the preparation for each meeting is to break down the agenda items and place them on the City website.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated this new idea will save staff time and money. She would like to make it easier for the public to access the agenda materials on the City website.

City Clerk Casey stated the agenda package is available online the same day that the Mayor and Council receive their compact discs.

Councilmember DeJulio stated in previous years Mayor and Council would receive agenda items on their discs that were not available online for the public. For the last two or three years that has been changed and the information is available to the public the same day the discs are received.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated she does not want to have to view each agenda item separately. She would like the information to be provided in one document.

City Clerk Casey stated agenda items for the Mayor, Council, and staff will continue to be delivered in a master document.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with this new agenda packet distribution method.

Public Works

1. Supplemental Agreement to the Contract for Design Services, Morgan Falls Road Improvements, (T-0034)

Transportation Engineer Greg Ramsey stated staff has been coordinating with Georgia Power for the last twelve months to get approval for this project. This item is a supplemental agreement for the design firm to finish the comments and plan revisions.

Councilmember John Paulson stated the City has spent a lot of money with this company and now there are extensive changes as a result of the GPC review. Why does the City have to pay for this when the

City has already paid the company a quarter of a million dollars to complete the design over the last three phases?

Transportation Engineer Ramsey stated there have been ongoing reviews with Georgia Power, since May 2010. The latest comments in plan reviews have resulted in changes to the City's existing and proposed stormwater plan.

Councilmember Paulson asked why this was not foreseen by SEI.

Transportation Engineer Ramsey stated the latest changes are due to the existing drainage. Water will not be allowed to flow where it is currently going.

Mayor Eva Galambos asked if this is the last design change.

City Manager John McDonough stated this change has the support of Georgia Power.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny asked where stormwater will go.

Transportation Engineer Ramsey stated the water will run into the Chattahoochee River.

Mayor Galambos asked if this will be the end of the design phases.

Transportation Engineer Ramsey stated he believes this is the end of the design phases.

City Manager McDonough stated the changes were solely driven by Georgia Power's review process.

Mayor Galambos asked about GDOT giving the City half a million dollars to improve Morgan Falls Road.

Transportation Engineer Ramsey stated the final announcement for the transportation enhancement funds has not been made.

Mayor Galambos asked how the City is receiving money for a local road.

Transportation Engineer Ramsey stated the funds are typically for pedestrian type improvements and since there will be pedestrian expansions on this road, it would apply.

Mayor Galambos asked where staff is with the plan for the park at the end of Morgan Falls Road, below the dam.

City Manager McDonough stated Georgia Power has been speaking with the National Park Service, but the City has not been privy to this communication. Georgia Power will not be ready to move forward with the City's discussions until they have finalized that. This specific park project has been put on hold.

Mayor Galambos stated in regards to the possible park project, there is resistance to placing parking on the Cobb County side of the park. There have been discussions with Georgia Power to have more parking on the Fulton County side of the pedestrian bridge.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio stated he thought the City already had an agreement and lease with Georgia Power on this property.

City Manager McDonough responded the City does have a lease with Georgia Power on that property. This is a challenging subject and there will be limited applications for the City due to the power lines and retaining the ability to construct underneath them. Staff will reengage in discussions regarding this issue. Georgia Power's discussions with the National Park Service have to be concluded before they will entertain further discussions with the City.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated she would love to see something at this location.

Mayor Galambos stated the concessions will be at the Johnson Ferry location.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with this item.

The following additional comments were provided by the Mayor and Council:

Mayor Eva Galambos stated all of Council is invited to attend the National Armed Services Day and she would like to know who will be attending. The ceremony will be held at the Cobb Galleria in May. She asked for the request to be sent out to all of Council and the seats reserved.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny stated Representative Joe Wilkinson will be joining the City for the Veteran's Day event as an honorary chairman.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated the Inaugural Bike ride and Brunch is May 15, 2011, in support of Bike Sandy Springs.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Date Approved: May 17, 2011



Eva Galambos, Mayor



Michael Casey, City Clerk

