

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, at 8:02 p.m., Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

Councilmembers present: Council Member John Paulson, Council Member Ken Dishman, Council Member Graham McDonald, Council Member Gabriel Sterling, Council Member Tibby DeJulio, and Council Member Andy Bauman.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Public Works

1. 15-409 2015 Pavement Condition Index (PCI) Analysis Presentation

Director of Public Works Garrin Coleman stated this discussion item is data to be presented by Mr. Thomason from Infrastructure Management Services (IMS) pertaining to the road pavement condition index for the City. This analysis is completed every three years.

Zac Thomason, National Client Services Manager with IMS Infrastructure Management Services, gave a 2015 Pavement Condition Index (PCI) PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Graham McDonald asked to have the expression back log defined.

Mr. Thomason stated back log is the list of road requiring full reconstruction and partial reconstruction activities. For the City of Sandy Springs, that is roads with a PCI of 50 and below.

Council Member John Paulson stated when there is a street that has to be reconstructed, the cost of a mile of street is five or six times more than the cost of continuous maintenance. The City has repaired a lot of streets and brought the PCI up higher. He suggested the City not allow the PCI of the roads to drop low because the cost to maintain the roads is cheaper than having to rebuild the roads. He asked if someone from staff drives the streets that are in the poorest condition and then goes back to compare the ratings.

Director of Public Works Coleman responded yes. He will be bringing a list of roads to Council for consideration at the next Council meeting for the next LMIG distribution, which is about \$600,000.

CMO

2. 15-410 Consideration of Resolution of Support for a Housing Stipend Trial Program for Police Officers and Firefighters

Mayor Rusty Paul stated this has been a major issue for him. It is very important that the City provides the public safety employees an opportunity to live in the community. It is almost immoral to ask police officers and firefighters to lay their lives on the line for a community in which they cannot afford to live. He thanked City Manager McDonough, Police Chief DeSimone, and Fire Chief Sanders for coming up with a stipend program. This tells the public safety employees that management cares about them and that they are wanted as an integral part of the community, more so than what they are today.

City Manager John McDonough gave a Police and Fire Stipend PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Tibby DeJulio stated several apartment complexes in the City offer reduced housing costs to public safety employees. He asked if there is a way to foster that type of program for the employees.

Police Chief Ken DeSimone stated almost every apartment complex in the City offers a discount for a Sandy Springs police officer to live in that complex.

Council Member DeJulio asked what the discount is.

Police Chief DeSimone stated it varies depending on what each apartment complex offers. Some of the higher crime apartment complexes offer free rent, while other apartments offer about a \$200 discount off the monthly rent.

Council Member Andy Bauman stated for an apartment that rents for \$1,500 a month, the public safety employee can receive this stipend from the City and the apartment may give a subsidy as well.

Police Chief DeSimone stated that is possible. The discount offered is up to the individual apartment.

Council Member Graham McDonald asked if the apartment discounts are used by the police officers.

Police Chief DeSimone stated he believes there are fourteen police officers that live in the City and one of those has a single family residence. Those numbers are out of 128 full time sworn police officers.

Council Member Gabriel Sterling asked if the stipend will come from the police and fire budget.

City Manager McDonough responded yes, for this year.

Council Member Ken Dishman stated asked if the fourteen officers that already live in the City will want to take advantage of the stipend.

Police Chief DeSimone stated he believes they would want to. The program calls for the stipend to be offered to five police officers and five firefighters. The names of those that qualify will be placed in a hat and names will be drawn to see who will receive the stipend.

Council Member DeJulio asked if there are many firefighters that live in the City.

Fire Chief Keith Sanders stated there are currently two fire inspectors that have moved into apartments temporarily, until they can find permanent housing.

City Manager McDonough stated the intent is for this program to be for new residents only. Staff will discuss what to do regarding the employees already living in the City.

Council Member Dishman asked about having a pool of employees and then dividing the benefit up among them.

City Manager McDonough stated staff can go back and do additional work on the proposed program. Staff can look at the pool concept and doing something similar to Dunwoody's program. Management wants to increase the number of public safety employees living in the City.

Mayor Paul stated having the employees living in the City and their City cars visible is important. Equally important is a message to them that management wants them to be a part of the community. The strongest message that can be sent is we appreciate what public safety does for the City and really want the employees as part of the community. The Sandy Springs community is unbelievably supportive of our public safety people. It is extremely important to send the message that the public safety employees are a valued part of the community.

City Manager McDonough stated assuming there is a \$400 per month per officer stipend for a year, that cost is \$4,800. If there are 50 officers that receive that stipend, the annual cost would be \$240,000. The

stipend should be \$500 per month to be appealing to people. If the stipend is \$500, the cost would be \$6,000 a year per employee. If 50 employees receive the stipend, the cost to the City would be \$300,000 annually.

Council Member DeJulio stated all the police salaries and compensation need to be updated, because of what he has heard from other communities. The City does not want to lose the most experienced and valuable employees.

Mayor Paul stated adjustments to the overall salary plan were made about one year ago. Updating the salary plan is an ongoing process.

Council Member Bauman stated some members of Council have been asked by constituents what they can do to support the Police and Fire Departments. He wonders if there is the ability to link this to a donation for a pool designated for police and fire housing subsidies.

Mayor Paul stated he would be open to that possibility.

Council Member McDonald stated he shares the desire to see more sworn officers living in the City. He has heard that sometimes the officers do not like to live in the community that they police. He asked if there is demand for a subsidy.

Police Chief DeSimone stated he believes if the officers have the opportunity to live inside the City, they will. Some officers do not want to police inside the community they live in. Police officers work twelve hour shifts and once done with their shift they have to commute home, which makes for a long day. Sandy Springs has to remain competitive. If the new cities incorporate, they will come to Sandy Springs to recruit new police officers, because we have the best officers in the state.

Council Member Dishman stated Officer Hanse's family lives in his neighborhood. They are a great family and active in the community. There is a certain sense of pride for the community when people talk about Officer Hanse. He is a big supporter of officers living in the community.

Council Member Paulson stated he likes the idea of the stipend and wants to try the plan out. There are some police officers who would rather not live in the community they police, because they do not want to go to the grocery store and run into someone they gave a ticket to. This program provides an opportunity for those that do have an interest to live in the City, if they wish. His daughter lived in an apartment complex off Mount Vernon Highway and a police officer lived there. His daughter would talk about how often she saw the officer's car at the complex. When officers live in the community it is noticed, and it is a positive thing.

City Manager McDonough stated staff will look at expanding the number of individuals that are eligible for the stipend and bring the item back to Council in two weeks.

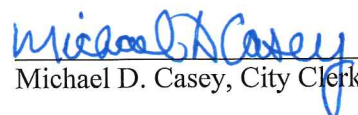
There was a consensus of Council to move forward with this item at a Regular City Council meeting.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Date Approved: November 3, 2015



Russell K. Paul, Mayor



Michael D. Casey, City Clerk