

Work Session of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on January 7, 2025 at 6:00 PM, Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

Prior to beginning the meeting, **Mayor Rusty Paul** outlined the plan for the scheduled public hearing at the next City Council Meeting on January 21, 2025.

There will be many people who want to speak on the request to amend the conditions of Use Permit U17-0001 to allow illumination of the existing athletic field at Mount Vernon School. My recommendation is to double the allotted time for public hearings from ten to twenty minutes. Each speaker will be limited to two minutes to allow everyone an opportunity to speak. There will be no formal presentations or anything that takes a lot of time. Normally people speak in the order they sign-up, however each side should organize their proponents and provide a list to **Raquel González, City Clerk**. We want to hear from as many people as possible. If there is no objection, this will be the process to follow.

I. Staff Discussion Items

- A. **2025-001** Proposed Ordinance to Amend the City of Sandy Springs' Code of Ordinances, Subpart A, Chapter 38, Article III, Division I by Creating Section 38-81 Entitled 'Buffer Zone'; to Provide for an Effective Date; and for Other Purposes

Mayor Paul said this work session is an opportunity for this topic to be introduced to Council and to the community. Council is invited to participate and ask questions and the community to provide input.

Dan Lee, City Attorney, and **Kenneth DeSimone, Police Chief**, presented an ordinance to amend the City of Sandy Springs' Code of Ordinances, Subpart A, Chapter 38, Article III, Division I by Creating Section 38-81 Entitled 'Buffer Zone'; to provide for an effective date; and for other purposes.

This proposal addresses incidents, such as the flyer distribution events from last year and protests at houses of worship or other public venues.

The proposed ordinances aim to balance First Amendment rights with regulations that ensure one individual or group's right to protest does not infringe on another's right to participate in religious or other lawful activities. Key measures include:

- Allowing the distribution of flyers but establishing timeframes to prevent residents from unexpectedly finding disturbing materials on their property
- Ensuring public oversight of police activities while prohibiting interference with officers performing their duties.

Rationale and Benefits:

Managing public gatherings and protecting public safety during crowd-related events can be complex. The Police Department and City Attorney's Office recommend adopting the ordinance to provide clear guidelines for law enforcement and the public. Establishing these parameters in advance will help reduce misunderstandings and enhance security while preserving free speech and assembly rights.

The proposed ordinance focuses on public property, offering advance notice about distance requirements for specific situations. Currently, decisions about the use of public property are made by the City Manager or their designee. This ordinance builds on existing protocols by formalizing expectations and

clarifying boundaries.

Under current practices, officers are often tasked with determining appropriate parameters for conduct at the scene, which can lead to inconsistent decisions and public confusion. By specifying what constitutes disorderly conduct and setting clear guidelines, this ordinance reduces ambiguity and ensures fair and consistent enforcement.

Chief DeSimone said this proposed ordinance is a collaborative effort to clarify disorderly conduct regarding antisemitic flyers, and the harassment of people at synagogues, temples, and Jewish schools. This ordinance will also provide clarity to the City's police officers, especially new officers enforcing the laws. For example, about two years ago in front of the police headquarters, a citizen referenced an unusual vehicle he wanted inspected to ensure it was safe for the road. Another citizen was outside filming, which is allowable, but he became aggressive and came between me and the citizen, who then fled. He was placed under arrest. A newer officer may not have known what to do. This ordinance will help protect police officers, citizens of Sandy Springs, and some of the City's institutions under threat by different groups, due to opposition of religious and political beliefs, and more.

City Attorney Lee said currently, the management of public property is an issue overlooked in the public realm, and this ordinance has two bases. First is there have been problems in Sandy Springs and some of the North Metro area with unwanted flyers, described as hate mail, left in different places intended to intimidate and terrify people. The City has been challenged with how to help the Police Department address that, and not interfere with people's right to free speech. The second is the issue about management of public property. Many times people do not think of public property, or the public in this case, the Council or City Manager on behalf of the people of Sandy Springs, having a public property right to control property. For example, it is not accurate to say because City Hall is a public building, the public can access it. Rules are set to when the public can come and go, and it must be that way to establish order and goodwill. The same is true about sidewalks and other public properties, like parks. Sandy Springs as with many jurisdictions, have had a problem with the unruliness of demonstrations intentionally blocking the entryway on public property into private properties. A private property owner can decide who can or cannot be on their property, and call the police for an offender to be charged with disorderly conduct. The intention of the public property part of the ordinance is to give the public and police officers some expectations of what that distance should be to maintain order, and the public can act in an appropriate manner, and know they cannot be less than eight feet away, or block entryways. The other part comes from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in an attempt to curtail some of the illicit dispensing of hate literature. That is the reason that people should not be required to take flyers that they do not want to take, and is the purpose of the ordinance.

Councilmember John Paulson said with the eight feet distance, there will be someplace where there may be a line of policemen and some protesters. If the protestor is seven and a half feet away and an officer had enough, can the protestor be charged with disorderly conduct? Why is this proposed ordinance being defined?

City Attorney Lee said there are two parts to this. Currently, police officers have the discretion to determine if conduct is disorderly regardless of how far they are. This establishes a barrier, not just in the distance of where people can be and demonstrate, but also in what the distance is that the charge can be made. It brings clarity to the already determined condition, and is the way the ordinance is intended.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked what are some practical examples of how this would work?

Chief DeSimone said the example **Councilmember Paulson** gave of a protestor being seven and a half

feet away, probably will not get the protestor locked up because of the officer's discretion, which is the biggest thing. A practical example is a new police officer in front of police headquarters or City Hall, conducting business and talking with a citizen about any matter, and someone interjects and tries to get between them filming. Protestors have walked through City Hall as auditors, and they can film as it is a public place, but when they get to the point of interfering with operations, this proposed ordinance would codify it better. Some states like Florida have a Halo law which gives first responders room to do their job. There was an incident where a firefighter was on the ground trying to give medical treatment to a victim, and somebody interjected themselves, between the first responder and the victim to record it.

Councilmember DeJulio said **City Attorney Lee** mentioned that City Hall is not a public space and there can be rules. What is the difference here?

City Attorney Lee said City Hall is a public space and rules are needed. The City and the City Manager, when Mayor and Council are not in session, can determine the use of the property within reason. This gives direction for how to manage people who are not using it appropriately and being disorderly.

Councilmember DeJulio asked do people not have the right to be in City Hall 24/7, and the City has the right to set the hours for when people can come visit?

City Attorney Lee said many people think that a public property is open to the public, and there are no rules to its use. That is not true. For example, City Hall is a public facility but it is closed certain hours of the day, which is determined by Mayor and Council, or by the operations head. The law allows for the City to control the use of public property. This proposal before Council is another piece of that. It gives the police and city manager the opportunity, and notice to the public that certain conduct will not be allowed on public property. If someone gets within eight feet of a public safety officer, they could be charged with disorderly conduct.

Mayor Paul said there were some concerns on how this proposed ordinance fits into the First Amendment. What are the safeguards that have been built in to protect this right, whether it is the ability to go into a religious institution, protest, and more?

City Attorney Lee said that part of the proposed law has been studied a lot, and it is always a balance. In situations where people have a right of assembly or right of free speech, they should know the limitation in advance as **Chief DeSimone** mentioned. If someone is unruly at any gathering on public property, police have the right, discretion, and duty to manage that in a public safety manner. This proposal places a limitation on that conduct geographically, and it gives notice to the public. It provides an order to most demonstrations and does not curtail what someone can say, just where they can say it.

Mayor Paul asked if for example someone wants to film something that a police officer is doing, is there anything in the proposed ordinance that prohibits that kind of First Amendment protected activity?

City Attorney Lee said no. It sets an eight-foot barrier for the safety of the public, and the officer doing their job.

Mayor Paul asked what about the restrictions on distributing flyers?

City Attorney Lee said the same thing is appropriate by consent, according to this proposal. By the same token, if a person has a right to deliver a flyer and it is hate mail, or something somebody does not want, that person has the right to not receive it. There has been a problem in Sandy Springs with this being delivered in places where it was intended to do something other than exercise free speech.

Councilmember Jody Reichel asked how many incidences has the City had where this proposed ordinance would take effect? How many times have people left literature on people's driveways? In my research, some cases went to the Supreme Court and some were overruled. Would this hold up in court?

City Attorney Lee said it would in my opinion.

Chief DeSimone said it is probably two to three cases per year with antisemitic flyers in large sections of neighborhoods of about twenty-five to forty homes.

City Attorney Lee said there was an incident of antisemitic literature placed on public stop signs, which falls in this category, if someone can be caught doing that this. At first glance, this is a tool to help law enforcement police public property.

Councilmember Melissa Mular said this is all on the ground but with all the drone technology, is a drone considered an artificial extension of a person?

Chief DeSimone said it is about the end result. Flyers can be thrown out the car window, or dropped from a drone, and would be the same result.

Mayor Paul asked if someone were using a drone to photograph police activity, and they were outside of the eight-foot zone, this proposed ordinance would not affect them, correct?

Chief DeSimone said correct.

City Attorney Lee said no one has figured out how to police a drone.

Chief DeSimone said drones are complicated in law enforcement now, and nobody knows what to do with them.

Councilmember Melody Kelley asked where did the language for the proposed ordinance come from? Did it come from the City Attorney's Office?

City Attorney Lee said as most laws, it is a collection from different locations. Some is from Florida law and the ADL, and very little is from the my office.

Councilmember Kelley said my first time seeing this proposed ordinance was within the past few days. At the last Council meeting on December 17, 2024, this body deferred an item because of scrivener's errors in the agenda memo, and was motioned by me. Agenda memos are important. It matters that I did not see an agenda memo for this language until yesterday.

City Attorney Lee said this is a work session and no Council action is needed.

Councilmember Kelley said it is still important as this discussion is public, and I wanted to be informed as possible by today. It matters whether it is a work session or Council meeting. I am encouraging my colleagues or anyone who brings an item to Council to be discussed in public, to have a memo attached when the agenda is published on Friday. This will at least give me the weekend to review. The proposed ordinance did not mention antisemitic language. If I knew this, I would have pulled ordinances from other cities, like Brookhaven that passed one dealing with flyers. I had no chance to review that language. The City passed a hate crime ordinance years ago, and I did not have a chance to review that and

compare language to understand. I would like to have another conversation about this process.

Mayor Paul said that is fair. Because of the holidays and more, some of this was delayed. The reason this was brought to work session is to give everybody a chance to discuss. This is simply the introduction of this proposed ordinance. There will be plenty of time to research and answer all the questions anyone has, both Council and the public, if it comes to Council for a vote.

Councilmember Kelley said the proposed ordinance states:

It will be a misdemeanor, a disorderly conduct if a person knowingly approaches another person within eight feet of that person, unless that person consents, for the purpose of passing a leaflet or handbill to displaying a sign to, or engaging an oral protest, education, counseling, or harassment, with such other person in the public way, within a radius of fifty feet from any entrance or exit door to a building structure, or place owned or operated by an educational institution, or facility or place of worship, or from the edge of a public right of way, walkway, or path.

Can more information about this language be provided?

City Attorney Lee said it is to block the walkway into any of these facilities.

Councilmember Kelley asked is public right of way like a sidewalk.

City Attorney Lee said it is a sidewalk.

Councilmember Kelley asked if a person is within a radius of fifty feet, does this mean they cannot be approached by another person handing them a leaflet, or educating them about something?

City Attorney Lee said without their consent, that is right.

Councilmember Kelley asked how do you get their consent, if you cannot be within eight feet of them?

City Attorney Lee said it is just like asking **Chief DeSimone** who is twenty-five feet from me for his consent.

Councilmember Kelley said hypothetically, someone may be passionate about educating the public on the link between alcohol and breast cancer, and that you are 40% more likely to get breast cancer if you drink alcohol every day. They may also make pamphlets and t-shirts about this link. How would someone engage around this?

City Attorney Lee said exactly as the ordinance says. You ask for consent.

Councilmember Kelley asked what if there is some place to stand that is not eight feet from anybody and is not blocking, but there has to be somewhere to be that is not eight feet from anybody, and you must ask for consent, and that person has to approve? What if you have good intentions and just want to help?

Chief DeSimone said for example, if the Police Department gets a 911 call from a liquor store about protestors disrupting the business, this proposed ordinance gives the police more legal authority. Police can tell the protestors they cannot intimidate customers that alcohol is bad and keep the business owner's customers from coming in. The protestors must go somewhere where it does not impede the foot traffic

of the customers going into the liquor store.

Councilmember Kelley said this prohibits you from being near any right of way.

City Attorney Lee said it prohibits you from bothering people that do not want to be bothered. If someone is okay being bothered, it does not apply.

Councilmember Kelley asked what is advocacy if you are not assessing whether someone wants to be bothered or not?

City Attorney Lee said you can do it outside of eight feet.

Councilmember Kelley said if holding a sign and someone had to pass me heading towards another space, they must come within eight feet of me, and that would technically be in violation. Would that be a misdemeanor?

City Attorney Lee said the City has never had an ordinance that covered every situation and there will not be one. Hopefully it will not be misapplied. The intent is to control those situations that are threatening, and not ones that are nonthreatening.

Chief DeSimone said in those situations there will always be a 911 call. Police are not on patrol looking at somebody protesting in front of the liquor store. The store owner will let us know this is a problem.

Councilmember Kelley asked but what if it is not a problem?

Chief DeSimone said if it is not, the police will not do anything.

Councilmember Kelley said the language is broad and could be misused.

Councilmember Andy Bauman said **City Attorney Lee** it is my understanding that this proposed ordinance is a mix of other precedences and other laws. I spoke with ADL today and have spoken with them before. This model ADL ordinance on the relative section can be compared with the proposed ordinance. It reads:

A person commits disorderly conduct when he or she knowingly approaches another person within eight feet of such person, unless such other person consents for the purpose of passing a leaflet, or handbill to displaying a sign to, or engaging in oral protest, education counseling or harassment with such other person in the public way, within a radius of fifty feet from any entrance or exit door, to a building structure or place owned or operated by an educational institution or facility, or place of worship, or from the edge of a public right of way, walkway, or path.

After the October 7, 2023 incidents in Israel, ADL approached me and another councilmember with some model ordinance language, not to the buffer ordinance here, but to leafleting, which is the distribution of leaflets to driveways, projectiles on buildings, and overhang and more. At the time, I was not opposed to it, but suggested they see how others felt. That was the last I had heard of that until this appeared on the agenda. My understanding is that they came back in, which is good as I had suggested, and they had since developed a new model ordinance. A big part of the operative language of this appears to be based on that model ordinance. I do not know what happened there but was told that it passed to Legal first, and this body heard about it over the weekend.

I am proud of my record in fighting hate crimes and combating antisemitism. I led the charge in Sandy Springs to adopt Georgia's first Municipal hate crime ordinance, and I have consistently championed policies that protect Public Safety while respecting constitutional rights. I fully understand and share the outrage over harassing demonstrations, particularly disturbing protests we have seen on college campuses, and near synagogues. Communities must be empowered to protect themselves from those who seek to intimidate or incite fear. I appreciate the ADL's intent and I view this as the ADL ordinance that we are now being asked to adopt, that has not been adopted in Georgia to date, and I understand maybe has been adopted in Nashville. I appreciate their intent proposing a buffer ordinance as a protective content neutral measure to deserve behavior. However, as a lawmaker I must ensure that every ordinance we consider respects constitutional rights and is tailored to address specific demonstrable problems. This ordinance raises serious concerns, not just for its vague and overly broad language, but also because it diverges from what the ADL proposed in other contexts. For example, this proposal has nothing to do with the original ADL model ordinances addressing flyers on lawns, which we have seen here in Sandy Springs, and projectiles, or banners, or overpasses. Nashville may be the only city to adopt this buffer ordinance and I am told Sandy Springs would be the first in Georgia. That precedent demands we ask tough questions about its implications and its necessity, and I thank **Councilmember Kelley** for starting that dialogue. Furthermore the process behind this proposal has been concerning. Transparency and collaboration are critical to crafting effective policy, and yet this ordinance appears to have been developed by the City Attorney working alone with the Mayor, without broader counsel input. Sloppy processes lead to sloppy outcomes, and this proposal reflects that.

Section B1 prohibits approaching within eight feet of another person for leafleting, protesting, or oral communication. With some specificity, how does this align with the First Amendment which protects these activities in public spaces?

City Attorney Lee said it does. It does not curtail the speech.

Councilmember Bauman asked have legal experts assessed whether this ordinance would survive constitutional scrutiny? We hear frequently from this dais and others saying that we need to be careful. The Governor's Office or the General Assembly might be unhappy. Has anybody asked the Attorney General's Office for an opinion on this?

City Attorney Lee said my understanding is that part of this ordinance came from the ADL, and was delivered to you, and maybe another councilmember.

Councilmember Bauman said no, it was not delivered to me. That buffer ordinance, in which the City is now modeling the proposed ordinance, was developed long after I met with ADL in November of 2023, and I suggested they take it to the Mayor, and that we work to build a consensus around this. I was not aware of this until this weekend, and until yesterday when I saw the posted language. That is beside the point of what my role is. In sound decision making and sound lawmaking, particularly in an area around constitutional rights of public assembly and free speech, and First Amendment rights, what level of scrutiny and what kind of scrutiny should the City be giving to these kinds of consequential ordinances? We cannot claim to protect public safety by eroding the very freedoms we are supposed to safeguard. If we are not careful, we risk becoming the problem we are trying to solve. Are you a First Amendment expert?

City Attorney Lee said the leaflet part of the ADL ordinance was delivered some time ago. My understanding is they came back to the mayor with an additional ordinance that had to do with the buffer, and the Mayor gave it to me to review. In my judgment, I am certain that the same First Amendment scrutiny that the ADL gave the leaflet portion of it, they gave to the buffer portion of it. The two should

be merged into one ordinance.

Councilmember Bauman said the leaflet ordinance that Brookhaven adopted, mentions time, manner, and place, overnight distribution, and more.

City Attorney Lee said in continuing my explanation, the First Amendment scrutiny that you are rightfully concerned about, my office, the Nashville City Attorney's Office, and the ADL who are champions for protection of First Amendment rights, have reviewed this.

Councilmember Bauman said that does merit higher scrutiny. What if a nonprofit group sets up a table outside a library to provide information about their programs, and someone hands out flyers within the buffer zone, would they be in violation of the ordinance even if they are not obstructing anyone?

City Attorney Lee said it depends if the library does or does not want them there.

Councilmember Bauman said it is a public facility.

City Attorney Lee said the library controls it, and the City does not.

Councilmember Bauman asked how would this ordinance enhance public safety in ways that the City's existing laws cannot?

City Attorney Lee said it gives notice to the public what geographic limitations are, for such activities that would infringe on other people's use of public property.

Councilmember Bauman asked how do you anticipate the Governor or Legislature would view this ordinance?

City Attorney Lee said they may not know it existed.

Councilmember Bauman said given past examples where they have preempted local actions such as attempts to regulate bow hunting, is the City opening itself to unnecessary state level conflict?

City Attorney Lee said no.

Councilmember Bauman said I want to reiterate my commitment to protecting public safety. These are important responsibilities. This is just a work session and I appreciate ADL's intent to proactively address harassment and intimidation near sensitive locations like synagogues and campuses. I do not see this as merged with the other pieces, but you are the City Attorney. However, good intentions alone are not enough as lawmakers. The City must ensure that every adopted policy respects constitutional rights, addresses clear and demonstrable problems, and avoids unintended consequences. Restrictions on speech and assembly must be narrowly tailored to address clear and demonstrable problems. Anything less risks doing more harm than good undermining the very freedoms we are sworn to uphold. I have concerns this ordinance as drafted and untested does not meet that standard. It is vague, and overly broad language risks doing more harm than good, undermining the very freedoms we are sworn to uphold. Moreover, it diverges significantly from the original ADL model ordinances which are far narrower in scope. I suggest that we pause and ask the necessary legal and practical questions, and engage with the community and experts to craft thoughtful effective solutions. There should be a second opinion on the constitutionality of this, and the City should give people a chance to weigh in. That is how we honor our commitment to both safety and freedom, and that is a standard I will continue to advocate for.

City Attorney Lee said it is my understanding this is the purpose of the work session for the people who have to vote. There may be an added word, but this is exactly what the ADL asked for.

Councilmember Bauman said I know that. It was not originally represented.

City Attorney Lee said you just mentioned it was not.

Councilmember Bauman said this is the ADL model ordinance on the buffer zone, and is not the ADL original model ordinance on leafleting. I have a lot of information about this and will be happy to share with you after the meeting.

City Attorney Lee said they have changed it.

Councilmember Bauman said we should bring them here. When I spoke with ADL yesterday and today, they were stunned that it was on the agenda without knowing about it. They would have liked to have been here and engage us. They were surprised that Council did not know about this particular iteration of it, and they apologized.

Chief DeSimone said Mayor and Council can be assured that the Sandy Springs Police Department (SSPD) deals with citizens constitutional rights every day and night. A little over a year ago, there were about two-hundred people across the street that would have stormed City Hall if it were not for the SSPD. We had to protect their right of speech, but we also protected this building and everybody in it. We did it without one complaint from anybody on either side.

Councilmember Bauman said the City and community are deeply indebted and incredibly grateful to the SSPD for keeping the peace. You are tasked with enforcing the laws, not making the laws, and we are here to protect the police in every instant. There is not a lot not in here that we were talking about, for example recording and more. I am focused on the language of this ordinance, and I am questioning constitutional values and rights of association. This should not be misconstrued with the profound and deep gratitude that I and this community have for the SSPD, in protecting our rights, both rights of protest, and rights to be free of obstruction and harassment. I could possibly end up supporting this. I am deeply concerned about the process, and that the proposed ordinance was quickly brought to Council without a lot of scrutiny, and there is a lot of scrutiny ahead. There should be no misunderstanding. These two things can be true at once, the deep gratitude that the community has for the protection, and concerns about constitutional rights.

Mayor Paul said this was done in work session for the opportunity to have an in-depth discussion and ask the tough questions, and is the perfect example of how a work session should work. There has been great input, and the public can see that this body deliberated this process. No document is perfect. The information will be gathered to perfect the proposed ordinance, and see if Council wishes to go forward with it in the future.

Councilmember Mular said the first bullet on the agenda item mentions leaflets on property, and after reading the current ordinance, I could not extrapolate how that applied to the proposed ordinance we are reviewing. To me, it appeared to be physical handing of hand bills, signs, getting in the way of people, and preventing entry or exit. I request that we do that if that is the intent.

II. City Council Discussion Items

Councilmember Reichel said the SSPD is appreciated for everything they do to make people feel safe in the community, and we should do all we can to make it easier for **Chief DeSimone** and all the officers to protect us and our property. This discussion was a great segway into this topic. Last week, three calls were received about party houses in Sandy Springs. **Chief DeSimone** mentioned receiving two to three complaints last year, and **Ginger Sottile, Director of Community Development**, said there were twenty-two houses with permits. There are many more houses in Sandy Springs that have short-term rentals without permits and are having parties that are affecting their neighbors, and the community. In another work session, Council should discuss either outlawing them, or doing a stronger ordinance to help code enforcement and the police enforce the laws.

Mayor Paul said it would be great for **Chief DeSimone** and his team to provide input to Council what extra protections might be needed in the City's ordinance. Are there any weaknesses or concerns that can be identified on the spot?

Chief DeSimone said not offhand. If there is a party house complaint, call the police to handle.

Councilmember Reichel said they are encouraged to do so. It is difficult for the SSPD to enforce.

Chief DeSimone said sometimes it is.

Councilmember Reichel said in my experience with rental houses, I tried for a couple months to have a VRBO or Airbnb near the Dome and made it clear there were to be no parties. There happened to be a big party with hundreds of people that disturbed the neighbors, and this could be seen on video. The police were called and I went there, but there was nothing they could do.

Chief DeSimone said the term party house is harder to enforce than this proposed ordinance is, because it is legit. For example, there can be a party at a house on Christmas and Hanukkah, but it is difficult to enforce.

Councilmember Reichel said there are rules that the person has to live at a house, and there are instances where someone may say they live there, but they do not. That is hard to enforce.

Chief DeSimone said there are many issues that make this challenging to enforce. Maybe some enhancements to the ordinance would help.

Councilmember Reichel said many cities have outlawed it. We can consider hardship cases if someone needs to rent a room out of their house, but the City is not near the mountains or the beach, and there are few reasons that people would have to rent a whole house in Sandy Springs. It is too hard to enforce and maybe we should just consider outlawing it. There have been cities that have outlawed short-term rentals at houses under thirty days.

Chief DeSimone said we will look into this.

Councilmember Paulson said going back to the proposed ordinance, the memo had two goals and objectives regarding leaflets as well as this buffer. Those are worthy goals and I support the idea of addressing these, so that everyone is safe and has their rights protected. More work need to be done.

Mayor Paul said we need to perfect it. We need to have a discussion where the public can provide feedback on all these topics discussed during work session. We benefit from having this kind of intense

conversation, as well as having the constituents see the debate and provide their input.

Councilmember Kelley said the Halo Law in Florida **Chief DeSimone** mentioned would be useful and can be incorporated into the proposed ordinance, specifically referencing first responders, and a verbal warning.

Chief DeSimone said that is a good idea. A few months ago, a first responder at the Fire Department tried to render aid to somebody in the Trader Joe's parking lot, and someone got in the way. The police had to be called. Incorporating this law would prohibit someone from interfering with paramedics doing life-saving measures.

Councilmember Bauman said there is a lot of work to be done. I am glad this is a work session and thankful Council was given the latitude to have the conversation. It is important we start with why. I am a lawyer but I am not a First Amendment expert. This language is overly broad and we need a second opinion. We should start with the goals. If we had this conversation without an ordinance with it, it would have taken a different tone. It was the language of the ordinance that raised concerns for me and others who are involved in the law. We should absolutely protect the City's law enforcement officers for the performance of their duties, and protect citizens from unruly contact assault. We would have been a lot better off as a process here, raising the issue without the language of the ordinance.

Chief DeSimone said this a positive report from **Policer Officer 3 Scott Ellis**, received today at 4:55 p.m., and reads:

We had our first fraud attempt report today where the victim walked into to the Shell station on Roswell Road near the Target to send \$13,000 via a Bitcoin machine. The victim saw the fraud alert sign by the Sandy Springs Police Department and decided not to send the money. I am glad you all had the signs made.

Mayor Paul thanked **Chief DeSimone** for sharing the report. That is great. The City received another positive report from **former Dunwoody Mayor Denis (Denny) Shortal**. He commended the first responders who rescued his distraught sister-in-law from being trapped in an elevator here in Sandy Springs. They were gentle and reassuring, and she was appreciative of their professionalism.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.