



**ACTION MINUTES**  
**WORK SESSION MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2020 6:00 P.M.**

**Mayor & City Council**

Mayor Anthony S. Ford  
 Mayor ProTem Alphonso Thomas  
 Councilman Elton Alexander  
 Councilwoman Yolanda Barber  
 Councilman John Blount  
 Councilwoman LaKeisha Gantt

**Administration**

Randy Knighton, City Manager  
 Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk  
 John Wiggins, City Treasurer  
 Michael Williams, City Attorney

Mission: To provide visionary leadership and superior municipal services that enhance the quality of life for citizens while creating a welcoming business atmosphere focused on sustainability and expansion of tourism and cultural events.

**I. Zoom Meeting Information -**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85824940139?pwd=VFIFTlZBUGRKS01YL1NRZlIzWTd3QT09>  
 Passcode: 814121

**II. Call to Order – Mayor Ford**

**III. Invocation – Mayor ProTem Thomas**

**IV. Pledge of Allegiance**

**V. Roll Call – All members were present except Councilwoman Gantt**

**VI. Motion to amend the Agenda to add Discussion Item #16 CaresAct Funding, and Item #17 Censure Policy: Alexander/Barber - Passed 4-0.**

**VII. Motion to amend the Agenda to Table Item#12 to be presented at the next Council Meeting: Thomas/Alexander - Passed 4-0.**

**VIII. Review of the Minutes for the following meetings: No Action**

1. 07/13/2020    2. 07/28/2020    3. 09/29/2020    4. 10/12/2020    5. 10/27/2020

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** must be submitted no later than one hour prior to the meeting. Please Visit the City's website under the Clerk's Page to complete the Public Comment Form.  
<https://stockbridge.seamlessdocs.com/f/20pkdz4mo7xb>

All persons wishing to speak for public comment must sign in with the City Clerk prior to the beginning of the meeting. You must sign your name, address, and phone number. You will be able to address the Mayor and Council for three (3) minutes. Speakers must respect all members of the elected body, officials, and staff. Defamation, unruliness and/or swearing will not be tolerated while meetings are in session.

Mr. Coren Randazzo referenced SPLOST V, noting taxes have to go to the purpose for which they were intended with a binding list; and questioned the expansion of the DDA map and boundaries and asked why the Spanish Village neighborhood was included without notice or approval of the DDA board members.

Ms. Ariel Shaw of Southern Crescent Women in Business encouraged everyone to shop small and support local businesses for Shop Small Saturday, on November 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

6. Council Consideration to approve Capital Projects Bonding  
Presented by Randy Knighton- City Manager, Ed Wall – Financial Advisor

Motion to approve \$22 million dollars of bonding as follows:

\$14 million dollars toward the Cultural Arts Center

\$ 7 million dollars toward the completion of the Amphitheater

\$ 1 million dollars toward the Master Trail Plan

Motion to approve Alexander/Barber – Passed 3-1 (Blount Opposed).

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

7. Second Reading of the Proposed FY2021 Operating Budget  
Presented by Randy Knighton – City Manager and John Wiggins - City Treasurer

Mr. Knighton noted this to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of the proposed FY2021 with the 3<sup>rd</sup>/Final Reading and Adoption taking place on December 14<sup>th</sup>; and gave an overview of the City's vision and mission, revenue projects taking into account COVID-19, and additional consideration for the financing of capital projects, specifically the completion of the Amphitheater project; new positions, and the addition of the Juneteenth Holiday celebration, and noted the original version presented at the Budget Retreat had been reduced from \$15 million to \$12.8 million dollars.

Mr. Wiggins noted there were reductions made to the Hospitality and Travel budget line items due to COVID restrictions.

Mayor ProTem Thomas recommended the hospitality line item in Permitting in the amount of \$1800 be removed; noted the Planning Dept. had \$100,000 to complete the UDC (Unified Development Code) in the FY2020 and FY2021 Budget and questioned the duplication.

Mr. Knighton noted the UDC was scheduled to be completed in FY2020 and because it was not, those funds will go to the City's Fund Balance.

Mayor ProTem Thomas referenced his conversation with Mr. Knighton about the \$58,000 in FY2020 to re-write the City's Sign Ordinance, questioning why it was not included in the UDC body of work of the UDC.

Mr. Knighton noted that it has been customary in his experience to have the development code include sign codes as well and has discussed the Sign Ordinance re-write with consultant who is currently working on the City's Unified Development Code and noted the Unified Development Code will include the provisions for signage as part of the UDC, and recommends a reduced balance in the budget for Professional Services for specialized signage which will be reflected in the presentation on December 14<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor ProTem Thomas noted the Council recently approved \$111,000 for Public Works equipment, and there is \$200,000 for equipment proposed in the FY2021 Public Works budget and asked if there should be earmarking in place, while noting Public Works does a good job of utilizing allocated funds, and noted there was no vehicle for the Economic Development Director will likely need a vehicle to be shared with Main Street in their new facility.

Mr. Knighton noted the City's current fleet of vehicles should be sufficient and the existing vehicle pool should be able to accommodate all staff.

Mayor Pro Tem Thomas asked the Council to weigh in on the proposed budget and asked the City Manager and Treasurer to look at items that could be trimmed to help fund the City's projects.

Mr. Knighton noted his intention to present a solid and realistic budget while meeting the provisions to serve the citizens, noting the final version was pending the Council's decision on bonding. Mr. Knighton also noted the budget with adjustments will be presented to Mayor & Council prior to the meeting for feedback.

Councilwoman Barber asked about the request for Capital Equipment in the Public Works Department for equipment recently awarded at the last meeting and asked if there will be a request for more equipment in the 2021 budget.

Mr. Aaron noted the recent award of \$77,000 was to replace worn out equipment in the Public Works department that was beyond its useful life and the proposed \$200,000 for equipment in the FY2021 budget is to purchase equipment for the proposed new (8) staff member's use if approved by the Council.

Councilwoman Barber referenced establishing a Police Department and noted the Police Administration Department and line item currently in the budget and asked if there would need to be a separate line item to reflect the development of a City police department and asked if General Funds would be used.

Mr. Knighton noted he had some ideas for funding and will propose using a different account, noting the current line item reflects police services such as off-duty officers at city meetings, security and other functions and events, etc. and noted a new line item would be in order.

Mr. Wiggins noted a new area of the budget could be reflected for the establishment of a police department in accordance with the uniform code as mandated by the State for the chart of accounts.

Councilman Alexander thanked Mayor Pro Tem Thomas for his surgical precision of analyzing the budget; supports Councilwoman's Barber's comments on establishing a police department, noting there is a consensus of the Council to move forward; referenced Councilwoman Barber taking the lead on beautification in the City.

Mr. Knighton suggested the Beautification Plan be a part of the City's Capital improvement Plan as this involves more than a one-time expense and would otherwise place constraints on the budget.

Councilwoman Barber asked that the Police Department line item be included in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading. Mr. Knighton confirmed that it would be.

Mayor Ford opened the Public Hearing: There were no speakers.

The Public Hearing was closed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

8. Council Consideration to approve the City's 2021 Meeting Dates.  
Presented by Vanessa Holiday - City Clerk  
Motion to approve Barber/Alexander Passed 4-0.
9. Council Consideration to approve the City's 2021 Agenda Timeline.  
Presented by Vanessa Holiday - City Clerk  
Motion to approve Blount/Barber Passed 3-0-1 (Alexander abstained)
10. Council Consideration to approve the 2021 Council Initiatives Calendar.  
Presented by Zenovia Pearson - Administrative Asst./Mayor & Council.  
Motion to approve Barber/Alexander Passed 4-0
11. Council Consideration to approve annual Stormwater Model Ordinance.  
Presented by Decius Aaron - Public Works Director  
Motion to approve Alexander/Barber Passed 4-0
12. Council Consideration to approve RFP No. 2020-0025P; State Contract No.99999-SPD-40199373 for the purchase of a Ford F-250 from Allan Vigil Ford in the amount of \$39,843.38. Funding Source: Events Department Budget.  
Presented by Lindell Miller - Procurement Manager and CieCie McGhee Conference Center & Events Manager  
Item Tabled – To be heard at the 12/14/2020 meeting.

13. Council Consideration to approve the contract extension for Charles Abbott & Associates for Building, Permitting and Inspections Services through March 31, 2021. Funding Source: Permitting Department Budget.  
Presented by Randy Knighton – City Manager  
Motion to approve the contract extension for Charles Abbott & Associates for Building, Permitting and Inspections services through March 31, 2021 using the line item 100-72000-5212020 not to exceed \$75,000 and line item 100-72000-521203 not to exceed \$25,000 and to proceed with issuing an RFP for Building, Permitting & Inspections services immediately and award bid at the March 8, 2021 meeting. Thomas/Alexander Passed 3-0-1 (Blount Abstained).
14. Council Consideration to approve RFP 201608-05 - Falcon Design Consultant for Engineering Services.  
Presented by Randy Knighton - City Manager and Decius Aaron - Public Works Director  
Motion to approve Barber/Blount Passed 4-0
15. Council Consideration to amend the City's Code of Ordinances to add the Economic Development Department.  
Presented by Michael Williams – City Attorney  
Motion to approve Barber/Thomas Passed 4-0.

## **DISCUSSION**

16. Council Discussion of CaresAct Funding.  
Mr. Knighton noted City of Stockbridge businesses could apply for and receive up to \$10,000 if their business has been directly affected by COVID; Non-profits could also apply if their agency has been directly affected by COVID. Mr. Knighton also noted Joseph Henning with the Henry County Chamber has been in contact with Connecting Henry regarding Non-profits receiving CaresAct funds to assist residents with rent, mortgage, and utilities assistance.  
  
Mr. Knighton noted he would be following up with Mr. Henning on the results of his conversation with Connecting Henry and also noted the City would be placing a complete a FAQ on the website to answer questions related to the CaresAct Funding.  
  
Councilwoman Barber suggested the City partner with Connecting Henry to provide a location in the City to provide Human Services to its residents in a Stockbridge location with County support.  
  
Councilman Alexander asked if the City could roll back the renewal license fees to help businesses who are trying to survive during this time and requested the difference between last year's fee and this year's fees be brought back to the Council for consideration to act.  
  
Attorney Williams noted the Council sets the fees annually, and it would take a vote of the Council to amend the fee schedule.

## 17. Council Discussion of the City's Censure Policy.

Attorney Williams noted it has been proposed that the City adopt a formal process before issuing a Censure as the City does not currently have a formal procedure, noting the two mechanisms in place would be the provisions in the Charter to remove and the Ethics Board upon receipt of a complaint, potential investigation, and are empowered to recommend action to the Council. Attorney Williams noted Censures can be perceived as political in nature, or self-serving and holding each other accountable and what the Council decides to do is in your purview.

Councilman Alexander referenced the process used to issue censures against him and motioned to move forward with a policy where the Council could only issue a Censure after an official has due process, a fact-finding investigation, and a hearing where the official has been proven to have violated the Charter and/or committed a crime of moral turpitude.

Councilman Blount called for a point of order noting this was a personal matter for Councilman Alexander who was attempting to adjudicate his censures and the discussion should remain on the policy and the censures can be placed on the Agenda to discuss as separate item.

Mayor Ford noted he is not in favor of the ordinance as presented; and stated that should it pass with a vote by less than four members of council, he would veto the ordinance, stating he prefers a policy be put in place rather than an ordinance.

Councilman Alexander restated the motion to approve a Resolution to move forward with a policy where the Ethics Board could only issue a Censure after an official has due process, a fact-finding investigation, and a hearing where the official has violated the Charter and/or committed a crime of moral turpitude; second by Councilwoman Barber. The motion passed 3-1 (Blount opposed).

Attorney Williams noted he would need to draft a Resolution for the approved action of the Council as the matter was brought to the Council for discussion purposes.

Councilman Alexander motioned to amend the Agenda to have the censures issued against him be read by the City Attorney; second by Councilwoman Barber.

Mayor Pro Tem Thomas noted such action would not be beneficial.

Councilwoman Barber withdrew her 2<sup>nd</sup> on the motion. Councilman Alexander withdrew his motion on the item.

## **MAYOR'S COMMENTS**

Mayor Ford read the 2020 Shop Small Saturday Proclamation and encouraged everyone to support local small businesses on Saturday, November 28<sup>th</sup>; wear your masks and stay 6 feet apart; noted the upcoming Georgia Senate Runoff on January 5<sup>th</sup>, noting the last day to register to vote is December 7<sup>th</sup>, Early Voting begins December 14<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> at the Merle Manders Conference Center and other locations, and Election Day is January 5, 2021 for candidates Perdue and Ossoff and Loeffler and Warnock, and noted it is your constitutional right to vote; Mayor Ford noted we may be in this pandemic for several more months, noting Georgia is in the red zone; noted free COVID testing is taking place at the Heritage Senior Center in McDonough Monday through Friday from 10am to 3pm, and to call for an appointment 800-847-4262, noting the center will be closed on Thanksgiving Day; Mayor Ford referenced the Free Drive Thru Turkey Giveaway that took place this past weekend at the Merle Manders Conference Center where in addition to turkeys, there were over 7,000 free canned goods distributed free flu shots administered by the Department of Health; Mayor Ford thanked the sponsors who donated to the event, Sylvain Funeral & Cremation Services, Hollis Harrell Insurance, Jacob Dingle, Feeding God's People Food Pantry, McDowell Investment Group and the members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Rho Sigma Lambda Chapter of Henry County; Mayor Ford wished everyone a safe holiday, reminding everyone to continue to wear your mask and wash your hands often; noted there would be an upcoming town hall the first week in December to discuss the potential police department and would include topics of a Millage Rate, General Funds, Feasibility Study and noted the meeting would take place via Zoom.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Meeting will be held via Zoom until further notice. Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please visit the city's website [www.cityofstockbridge.com](http://www.cityofstockbridge.com) for the meeting invitation link, Facebook page or contact City Hall offices at 770-389-7900 for updates and detailed information.**

- Main Street Advisory Board Meeting, Friday, December 11, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. Via Zoom - 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month
- City Council Meeting – Monday, December 14, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. Via Zoom
- Downtown Development Authority Meeting, Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Via Zoom - 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month
- Youth Council Advisory Meeting, Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Via Zoom - 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month
- Youth Council Meeting, Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Via Zoom - 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month
- City Council Work Session Meeting, Tuesday, December 22, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Via Zoom

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### **UPCOMING PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- Public Hearing – Adoption of Proposed FY2021 Operating Budget  
Monday, December 14, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. Via Zoom
- Public Hearing – Rezoning Case No. RZ2020-02  
Monday, December 14, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. Via Zoom

All City Offices will be closed Thursday, November 26th and Friday, November 27th in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Shop Small Business Saturday, November 28, 2020  
Support Local Small Businesses in Stockbridge!

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion to convene Executive Session for Personnel, Real Estate and Litigation  
Thomas/Barber Passed 4-0.

Councilman Blount exited the meeting during Executive Session.

Motion to Adjourn Executive Session Alexander/Thomas Passed 3-0.

Motion to Reconvene the Work Session Meeting Alexander/Thomas Passed 3-0.

Attorney Williams stated based on a discussion in Executive Session, a motion would be in order to affirm the City Manager's decision and reject the appeal of Ms. Camilla Moore with respect to her termination from the City. Motion to approve Alexander/Thomas Passed 3-0.

Motion to adjourn Thomas/Barber Passed 3-0.