



WORK SESSION MEETING ACTION MINUTES

TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 2021 6:00 P.M.

Mayor & City Council

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

Administration

Randy Knighton, City Manager
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
John Wiggins, City Treasurer
Quinton Washington, City Attorney
Jeremy T. Berry, 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/86559426207?pwd=NmNFbHVlVXpMWW9UOEEdSSGszVzhBdz09>
Passcode: 827392

II. **Call to Order – Mayor Ford**

III. **Invocation – Randy Knighton**

IV. **Pledge of Allegiance – Recited in unison by all in attendance.**

V. **Roll Call – All members were present.**

VI. **Motion to amend the Agenda:** To call for a full investigation of Mr. Elton Alexander relating Charter Section 2.17 and the \$1.725 million dollar lawsuit settlement: Blount/Gantt failed 2-0-2 (Barber/Thomas abstained – Alexander did not participate in the vote). Councilman Blount asked Mayor Ford to restate the vote. Mayor Ford stated there were two votes in favor of the motion, no votes against and two votes abstained, noting Mayor Pro Tem Alexander did not participate in the vote and restating the motion failed, and the action was confirmed by Attorney Washington.

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

1. 03/08/2021
2. 03/30/2021

PUBLIC COMMENTS

All public comments must be submitted to the Clerk no later than one hour prior to the meeting. The Public Comment Form can be found on the City's webpage on the City Clerk's page at: <https://stockbridge.seamlessdocs.com/f/20pkdz4mo7xb> and the form must include your name, phone, and email contact information. Comments are limited to (3) three minutes and will be read by the Clerk during the meeting, respecting all members of the elected body, officials, and staff. Comments including defamation, unruliness and/or swearing will not be accepted.

The City Clerk read comments submitted from the public:

- Mindy Mayers – In support of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander remaining in office.
- Charles Marshall – In support of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander remaining in office.
- Yvonne Marshall – In support of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander remaining in office.
- Tamika Robinson – In support of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander remaining in office.
- Z Griffith – Supports the removal of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander
- Dolton19 – In support of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander remaining in office.
- Bernice Peters – In support of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander remaining in office.
- Sunny Randazzo – Expressed concerns about the Amphitheater construction and cost; being able to attend City Council meetings in-person; supports the removal of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander.
- Andrew Dixon – Expressed his concerns of Councilmembers civility and actions towards each other, allegations against officials; called upon the Council to respect each other, restore meeting decorum, and represent the people of Stockbridge.
- Ralita Mims – In support of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander remaining in office.
- Alicia Boyd - In support of Mayor Pro Tem Alexander remaining in office.
- Rhonda Brown – Comments were sent to Mayor Ford.

INFORMATION

3. 2020 DCA Hotel/Motel Tax/Tourism Report

Presented by Laura Luker, Director of Tourism

Ms. Luker noted the Henry County Visitor's Bureau launched their logo and name *Visit Henry County GA* in 2020 stating the name change better reflects the Mission, is more modern and noted due to the pandemic, the new brand and visitors guide was launched online by video and includes Floyd Chapel Baptist Church, Stockbridge hotels, free city spread and is distributed at the four Georgia Welcome Centers in brochure racks custom made by BarnBeautiful; noted new ads to Explore Stockbridge including the Bed & Breakfast at Stockbridge Lakes, M L King, Sr. Heritage Trail, and Panola Mountain Park; referenced the OTT/CTV Videos being advertised on Hulu and Smart TV's; noted the website has the City of Stockbridge landing page was one of the top 10 landing pages for 2020 with traffic up 95% year-over-year; referenced working with Main Street staff regarding a robust Artisan Trail which is gaining great traction; noted the COVID-19 impact and program specific information pages that have been included; noted the partnerships with local hotels, restaurants and event facilities and the free Lunch and Learn training sessions that were implemented to assist these businesses to operate during and post pandemic; noted the monthly Customer Service Awards, free Summer Webinar Series featuring Social Media Best Practices , Artist Consortium formed in 2020 made up of members of the arts community, free marketing opportunity offered to tourism partners; and partnerships with Arabia Mountain

and Panola Mountain State Park to promote the new PATH extension; and reviewed 2021 noting the recent launch of the Guest Experience 101 with free, online customer service training for tourism partners and will launch this summer the Hospitality for All: A Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Program which will be a free online course taught by experts in their field for tourism partners; and the Bushy Tail Art Trail consisting of Squirrel picnic tables decorated by local artist and installed in public parks, noting 10 have been installed so far; and referenced legislation changes – HB317 Effective July 1, 2021 where all Short-Term Rentals will be required to collect and remit hotel/motel tax which will increase the revenue for municipalities; and gave an overview of the FY2020 Annual Hotel/Motel Tax Report for the City of Stockbridge where \$167,817.90 was collected, noting a sharp decline in revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and reviewed the expenditures where the City of Stockbridge, the City of Hampton, the City of Locust Grove and Henry County participated and shared costs for CVB operations.

OLD BUSINESS

4. Council Consideration to approve the Henry County/City of Stockbridge Aquatic Center IGA (Intergovernmental Agreement)
Presented by Randy Knighton, City Manager
Motion to approve Alexander/Gantt Passed 4-0 (Councilman Blount was not present).

NEW BUSINESS

5. Council Consideration to approve Amphitheater Change Order No.16 in the amount of \$67,022.00. Funding Source: Bonding
Presented by Randy Knighton, City Manager
Motion to approve Alexander/Barber Passed 3-0-1 (Councilwoman Gantt abstained – noting she was not present for the discussion due to phone difficulties); (Councilman Blount was not present).

COMMENTS FROM THE MAYOR

Mayor Ford noted we are still in a pandemic with vaccinations being the priority; noted testing is available at the Henry County Heritage Recreation Center in McDonough with free COVID testing Mon-Thu 9am – 3pm and Sat 9am -noon noting an appointment is required; noted vaccinations are key to stomping out the virus and the number to call for a reservation is 888-457-0186 Mon – Fri 8am – 8pm and Sat & Sun 8am – 5pm; noted vaccinations are taking place at the Atlanta Motor Speedway on Tuesdays 8:30am – 1pm, 1pm – 3pm and with extended hours from 3pm – 7pm and Fridays at Mt. Carmel Park in Hampton; noted reservations can be made online at gta-vras.powerappsportals.us where you will be asked for your demographic, gender, race, ethnicity, age, medical history, current illnesses, COVID diagnosis, previous COVID testing and vaccinations, and contact information; noted the last ten days have been hectic and contentious times for the City and asked everyone to keep the faith saying things are going to

get better; stated for himself and the Council, all need to remain above board and stay above the fray be respectful to each other and the citizens as well; asked that everyone not get too emotional and remain steadfast on the mission that you were elected for and do what is best for the citizens; noted there are lots of great things coming for the City and lots of great things going on; and remain focused and work towards the goals and the betterment of the City as a team and to be mindful of what you say publicly and/or privately and via social media; asked that citizens also be mindful of what you say and post on social media as well; noted the City has a great venue opening up very soon, noting the Amphitheater will be a game changer in Henry County and the region along with the development of the City's downtown area; noted the briefing earlier in the meeting from the tourism bureau and the excitement about the Amphitheater; noted the Cultural Arts Center being developed soon and everyone being able to get out to social events and doing the things we like to do such as Tasty Tuesday and Bridgefest; noted the City is moving forward with a police department and is in the process of hiring a Police chief and that the City is going down the path of success for its citizens and taking this diamond in the rough and make it shine, as it is in the best interest for all of us; noted the City has a bright future ahead of us with lots of potential and asked that everyone maintain their composure, be respectful to each other, noting no one is perfect, we are human, and to do the best that we can for the citizens we serve; asked that the City be kept in prayer and to keep the faith.

CITY OFFICES ARE CLOSED DUE TO COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

As a COVID precaution, City offices are closed to the public until further notice. Staff is operating under telework protocol. Please contact the City's webpage cityofstockbridge.com to contact each department for service and information.

CITY OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, MAY 31ST IN OBSERVANCE OF MEMORIAL DAY.

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 for the meeting invitation link, Facebook page or contact City Hall offices at 770-389-7900 for updates.

- City Council Meeting at 6:00 p.m. Via Zoom – 2nd Monday of each month. (May 10)
- Main Street Advisory Board Meeting, at 9:00 a.m. Via Zoom - 2nd Friday of each month (May 14)
- Downtown Development Authority Meeting, at 6:00 p.m. Via Zoom - 3rd Tuesday of each month (May 18)
- Youth Council & Advisory Meeting, 6:30 p.m. Via Zoom - 3rd Tuesday of each month (May 18)

- City Council Work Session at 6:00 p.m. Via Zoom – Last Tuesday of each month unless otherwise noted. (May 25)
- Planning Commission Meeting, at 6:30 p.m. Via Zoom – 4th Thursday of each month (May 27)

CITY EVENTS

Please join the City of Stockbridge for a Virtual Memorial Day Musical Tribute and Remembrance - Monday, May 31, 2021

COUNCIL INITIATIVES

Please join Councilman John Blount for the Virtual National Day of Prayer Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 6:30 pm. Watch it on Facebook Live at @StockbridgeCityHall

Motion to adjourn Thomas/Gantt Passed 4-0 (Councilman Blount was not present).