



Where Community Connects

COUNCIL RETREAT
5785 Peachtree Dunwoody Rd.
Sandy Springs, GA 30242
February 7, 2024
9:00 a.m.
Summary Minutes

Mayor & City Council

Mayor Anthony S. Ford
Mayor Pro Tem Kyle Berry Sr.
Councilmember Elton Alexander
Councilmember Yolanda Barber
Councilmember LaKeisha Gantt
Councilmember Alphonso Thomas

Administration

Frederick Gardiner, City Manager
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
Vacant, City Treasurer
Quinton Washington, City Attorney
Samantha Embry, 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.

Staff Present: Decius Aaron, Public Works Director and Frank Trammer, Police Chief, Richard Godfrey, Major and Ron Momon, Major

DAY TWO AGENDA

Mayor Ford called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Invocation by Councilmember Thomas

Pledge of Allegiance recited by all in attendance.

City Clerk, Vanessa Holiday was asked to proceed with the roll call. All members were present.

Motion to adopt the Agenda made by Mayor Pro Tem Berry; seconded by Councilmember Gantt. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Mayor Ford read the Civility Pledge that has been adopted by the City: *The way we govern ourselves is often as important as the positions we take. Our collective decisions will be better when differing views have had the opportunity to be fully vetted and considered. All people have the right to be treated with respect, courtesy, and openness. We value all input. We commit to conduct ourselves at all times with civility and courtesy to each other.*

Mr. Gardiner gave a review of Day One referencing downtown project updates and incentives from Mr. Allonce, the PATH Foundation Agreement and scope from Mr. Ganther, the renaming of the Ted Strickland Community Center, and updates from Falcon Design Consultants; and gave an overview of

today's meeting Agenda to include a presentation from the Police Chief, followed by a tour of Sandy Springs.

Councilmember Alexander asked that the Connection Center remain open to the public and include marketing materials on display.

Councilmember Thomas noted the City Council has requested timely updates and referenced MBO (Management by Objective).

Mayor Pro Tem Berry agreed, noting there needs to be a cadence established whereas there is a process by which the Mayor & City Councilmembers receive updates on projects, and that there is to be a process and transfer of information, that in the event a Director leaves, the project will continue to move.

Councilmember Gantt noted the Council has previously established a project reporting timeline and there was a time when the City Manager's Office would place the report in the Agenda Book.

Councilmember Alexander noted he is focused on results and prefers weekly updates and a monthly report to be received no later than the seventh day after the end of each month.

Mr. Gardiner referenced the city's See Click software and information tool that is not being used to its full capacity; agreed with the weekly and monthly reporting requests and referenced the growth of the city without any executive positions added.

Police Department

Chief Trammer noted the importance of succession planning, with crime as the metric; noted police departments must police smarter and made a request for a Crime Analyst position along with a \$14,000 software program.

Councilmember Gantt noted it would be wise to make the investment in the polling data software which would be less costly than hiring staff, with benefits and equipment.

Major Richard Godfrey noted it takes 8 – 10 hours to look at migrant data; and noted there are software programs available today to streamline the process and will research the history of records management system.

Chief Trammer noted the system previously used by the County has been suspended as it was deemed to be too convoluted; and noted the department has been looking at software and is seeing the cost of up to \$500,000; and noted there are validity questions with some of the data being received from the county and noted the police department is currently paying Henry County \$39,000 annually and is paying \$29,000 annually for the police department's use of the city's Tyler Technology software.

Councilmember Thomas noted his concern regarding patrolling and asked Chief Trammer what the plan is to increase patrolling throughout the city for a more visible police presence.

Chief Trammer noted there are four (4) Zones with one officer assigned to each zone, and there are challenges with having a young police department and different breed of officer in 2024.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry asked if the city is still utilizing Henry County for 911 Services and asked what the frequency of reporting is.

Chief Trammer confirmed the Stockbridge PD is using the County for 911 services, and that the you can compare calls for service and incident reports; and noted the police department is using more real time data; noted the city's police department does not have a Special Investigations Unit and will need to rely on Henry County; noted the Henry County Sheriff's Office has suspended their Special Investigation Unit due to a staff shortage, and recommends combining resources.

Councilman Thomas noted that there are a number of issues happening in the background that citizens and business owners are unaware of, and they just want to see policing.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry noted you can use GCIC Data to pull statistical data.

Mayor Ford asked if there are Mutual Aid Agreements in place.

Chief Trammer confirmed and note the police department relies on Georgia State Patrol for services regarding accident fatalities at no cost; and noted the department is paying Henry County \$6,000 annually to use the gun range, where initially the use was free of charge.

Chief Trammer noted the Henry County can enforce within the County, to include Stockbridge city limits.

Attorney Washington noted the citations may be beyond the City's Code of Ordinances, and the city could not compel them to submit those citations to the Stockbridge Municipal Court.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry noted that with the addition of the Stockbridge Police Department, the area in which the Henry County Police have to cover has been reduced.

Chief Trammer noted the police department is working towards state certification by the end of the year, noting only 150 departments are accredited.

Mayor Ford asked about the recent news regarding Ring cameras.

Chief Trammer noted the city's police department utilizes Flock cameras (18 Fixed) and (1 Mobile) along major thoroughfares, and in police vehicles; noted twelve (12) traffic cameras strategically placed throughout and a drone program, all funded by ARPA; and noted there needs to be specific training to operate the equipment.

Chief Trammer noted flashing lights are not required in the school zone, and that an SRO is in place directing traffic before and after school is in session; and noted federal funding was received for the License Plate Readers in the school zones.

Councilmember Alexander noted the city's homeless camps and panhandling must be addressed.

Chief Trammer stated that in order to address the needs of the community, the police department needs 79 officers, and the department is currently at (62) plus the (4) Public Safety Officers added in the FY2024 Budget for a total of 66, therefore short (13) officers and needs two additional Code Enforcement Officers.

Councilmember Gantt noted there needs to be more patrolling of businesses, more Code Enforcement citations issued, citations for overgrown grass, and junk vehicles.

Councilmember Thomas noted the importance of Code Enforcement, Public Safety and Public Works being critical departments of every city as they represent the face of the city, and everyone wants to live in a clean and safe city.

Chief Trammer noted that Major Godfrey is spending 70% of his time on financial matters and grants for the department.

Councilmember Gantt asked what the role is for the city's Grant Administrator and what assistance is being offered to the department.

Mr. Gardiner noted the Grants Administrator is to make sure the city remains in compliance with the receipt of federal funding.

Mayor Ford asked where the city can find the funding for two additional Code Enforcement Officers.

Mr. Gardiner noted 2024 is a wash, and the request would be considered for the FY2025 budget.

Councilmember Gantt noted that she would not commit to any new taxes.

Chief Trammer stated that his request is to increase the police department budget by \$1.5 million dollars for salary costs and equipment.

Councilmember Alexander asked at what level is the department currently operating, and what adjustments can be made.

Chief Trammer's response was Level C – and needs a minimum of (10) ten additional officers.

Mr. Gardiner noted \$500,000 can be moved from Capital to salaries and \$711,000 from the 2024 First Quarter Speed Detection funds to cover the equipment and would require a Budget Amendment to be approved by the Council.

Councilmember Barber noted that it was her understanding that the 3.77 millage was implemented to pay for police services.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry asked what the proposed revenue projects look like for Quarter 2, 3 and 4, and also asked what grants are being sought.

Mr. Gardiner noted the digest will be reviewed in July, and staff will put projections together.

Chief Trammer noted Pulte Homes donated \$25,000 to the police department to be used to support bonuses and salaries for the department to remain competitive; and noted that when an officer completes the Police Training Academy, he/she is required to remain with the city for two years.

Mr. Gardiner also noted that it is important for the officers to have access to affordable housing and is working with Shannon Sagnot with Henry County on options.

Councilmember Barber suggested a shift differential.

Chief Trammer noted there is not a need to incentivize, however, you may need to consider a bonus as other police departments are advertising.

Councilmember Gantt noted Stockbridge set the mark with salaries, take home cars and benefits; however, the city cannot afford to continue to operate that way.

Chief Trammer noted there is a good supply of applications, and that 1 out of 10 will be hired.

Mayor Ford noted the HOA's are paying for off-duty officers to patrol their neighborhoods from their HOA budgets.

Motion to adjourn at 12:15 p.m. was made by Councilmember Barber; seconded by Councilmember Alexander. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Respectfully submitted by:



Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk



Anthony S. Ford, Mayor