

**City Council of the City of Greenville
Work Session**

**Monday, October 11, 2021
3:30 p.m.**

**Meeting Location:
Greenville Convention Center, 1 Exposition Drive**

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL: Mayor Knox White (Virtual); Councilmember John M. DeWorken, Councilmember Lillian B. Flemming, Councilmember Kenneth C. Gibson, Councilmember Wil Brasington; Councilmember Russell H. Stall; and Councilmember Dorothy H. Dowe

CITY STAFF: City Manager John F. McDonough; City Attorney Michael S. Pitts; City Clerk Camilla G. Pitman

Mayor Pro Tem Flemming called the meeting to order for the purpose of discussing the following matters.

Neighborhood Improvement Bond

Deputy City Manager Eden Freeman and Deputy Director Karen Crawford provided a presentation on the Neighborhood Improvement Bond (NIB) as located in Council's Agenda packet. Ms. Freeman introduced the preliminary work undertaken by staff with implementing the NIB, as approved during the FY22 budget process. Ms. Freeman provided the topics of discussion including updated sizing proposal, potential projects including (a) road improvements, (b) parks and recreation center improvements, (c) transportation management, (d) sidewalk construction, and (e) contingency and reserve, and Council/community involvement.

Ms. Crawford referred to a review of the original proposal and the decision to push out the timeline allowing for two tranches of money to come through. Ms. Crawford stated the change allows for the City to add an additional \$4 million to the total project which is coming from savings related to debt payments and which would involve two bonds occurring in FY2022 and FY2024. Ms. Crawford also stated the two tranches will allow for projects which are ready to move forward to receiving funding and begin.

Councilmember Dowe asked if the pay back structure is similar to the Unity Park hospitality tax bonds and if there would be penalties for early payment. Ms. Crawford responded that it will be similar and that she is unaware of any penalties for early payment.

Ms. Freeman referred to Council's discussions involving neighborhood dividends and advised after further review, staff created an Option A and Option B with both including the additional \$4 million but Option B being broken down in allocations of \$1 million per district. Ms. Freeman advised that for this presentation, staff is requesting feedback on whether Council members prefer Option A or Option B. Ms. Freeman also advised upon receiving feedback, staff will return to Council on a later date with proposed projects for consideration.

Councilmember Stall stated he would like to lobby under Option B that At-Large be considered to be a district and receive funding. Ms. Freeman responded under the proposed structure, At-Large would be in consultation with the districts, however, if Council chooses, an adjustment can be made.

Councilmember DeWorken stated there are times when funds become available and district representatives see areas within their own district that needs some assistance on a micro geographic level. Councilmember Dowe stated she is asking for a policy to be in place to allocate the funds to the districts. Councilmember DeWorken agreed and stated he would not want the proposal to replace the effort of developing a policy.

Ms. Freeman provided potential projects for each of the project categories. Regarding road improvements, Ms. Freeman stated the City has applied for a \$3 million dollar match to the C-Fund Committee, which is scheduled to meet on Thursday. Ms. Freeman advised the ranking of streets will not be available until the beginning of the year. Councilmember Brasington asked if there is an existing road assessment, and Ms. Freeman responded the current one is five years old, which is too old in her opinion. Councilmember Stall asked if the City would have the staff and equipment to perform street work. Ms. Freeman responded the City will or it will contract out services so that the work is completed during the entirety of the NIB.

Councilmember Flemming commented on road improvement and flooding needs on Cook Street. Regarding bridge repair, Councilmember DeWorken referred to Queen Street bridge and suggested speaking with the Legislative Delegation for assistance and potential resources. Councilmember Dowe asked about the condition of Hilly Street in the Greenline-Spartanburg neighborhood. Interim Engineering Services Manager/City Engineer Clint Link responded the bridge is affected every time it floods. Mr. Link stated staff would like to see improvements in other locations of Greenline-Spartanburg and either close or remove the bridge. Councilmember Flemming expressed her concerns with having only one entrance into the neighborhood. Councilmember Dowe recommended reviewing the matter further and keep it on the radar, and Councilmember Gibson agreed. Councilmember Gibson stated if you attempt to close that road, then you limit their access to individuals on that side of the neighborhood.

Regarding Parks and Recreations, Councilmember Dowe stated she would like to have discussions with the high schools that use the City's tennis courts to determine how they would be impacted if changes are made in the use of tennis courts for pickleball. Councilmember Gibson stated he is supportive of building pickleball courts, however, he would not reduce the number of tennis courts currently in use. Councilmember Gibson referred to tourism opportunities available in connection with tournament play. Councilmember Brasington suggested considering funding projections for equipment replacement in the proposal.

Regarding transportation management, Ms. Freeman provided a proposal for developing an Intelligent Transportation System Master Plan and referred to proposed projects including infrastructure and equipment. Councilmember Stall suggested naming the project Traffic Management instead of Transportation Management.

Regarding sidewalk construction, Ms. Freeman stated staff is working on revised criteria for NSTEP and once it is completed, staff will create a prioritized list. Ms. Freeman referred to the Section 108 loan and advised staff is working on an application for funds to assist with installing sidewalks in special emphasis neighborhoods. Councilmember DeWorken suggested continuing

to increase work on utility undergrounding. Mayor White agreed and suggested utility undergrounding on Augusta Road.

Regarding Council's feedback for Option A and Option B, Councilmember Flemming expressed support for Option B. Councilmember Dowe stated she liked Option A better but commented she does not like tying Council district projects to the bond. Councilmember DeWorken stated he finds \$4 million to be a lot of money and that he sees the funding going for infrastructure projects that are important but do not cost a lot of money. Councilmember Brasington referred to using the funds for sidewalk requests, however, he stated having a long-standing policy is the ultimate approach.

Councilmember Dowe stated she is looking for a lasting policy to give Council members confidence that over time the dividends will come to them. Councilmember Brasington stated the duration is key and the policy would be when financial and economic conditions allow. Councilmember Gibson stated while the funds are enticing, he would rather have a system where funds are being spent equitably in the right places. Councilmember Brasington suggested staff conduct a hypothetical forecast to approximate what an average year dividend would look like. Councilmember Dowe suggested it would be helpful to know where the money was spent last time when it occurred and what policy would trigger what.

Councilmember Stall questioned whether all the districts used their \$250,000 from the last time, and Ms. Freeman responded all has been allocated but not spent. Councilmember Stall reiterated his support for funding At-Large Council members as well as districts. Mayor White stated he likes the contingency better defining where those type of allotments would come from and suggested the contingency reserve be increased.

In summary, City Manager John McDonough advised that staff will work on an annual policy based on a percentage of the fund balance reserve, possibly \$200,000 to \$250,000, and will prepare a mid-year update on the fund balance and bring it back to Council. Councilmember Brasington asked for duration to be considered as well providing the relativity of the money in a plan over a period of years.

Councilmember Dowe stated that she is not disagreeing with the suggestion to provide funding for At-Large Council members, but she does want to be included in the discussions with the neighborhoods.

Petition for City Control of Local Road – Augusta Street

Mr. Link provided a proposed Resolution being presented to Council in the Formal Meeting requesting city ownership of a portion of state-owned street located on Augusta Street, as located in Council's Agenda packet. Mr. Link referred to a safety road audit being completed by Stantec and stated he anticipates bringing it to Council in a month or so.

Mr. Link stated there are benefits to owning the road including implementing the complete streets policy. Mr. Link also stated there is no charge to take the road over, however, he estimates \$140,000 annually for infrastructure improvements. Mr. Link advised the City could approach SCDOT for assistance with immediate maintenance needs. Councilmember Dowe asked how difficult it is to obtain a list of the immediate needs, and Mr. Link responded not hard. Mr. Link also advised the road was resurfaced in two different phases within the last eight to ten years, however, there are some drainage issues existing. Councilmember Dowe requested the City

provide an “ask” to SCDOT because it is a long road and it will allow the City an opportunity to support the surrounding neighborhoods. Councilmember Dowe shared her support for taking the road back. Councilmember Brasington agreed with the “ask” request.

Councilmember DeWorken thanked staff for their work on Stone Avenue and referred to the comparison of distance and timing with taking Pleasantburg Drive instead of taking Stone Avenue when traveling north of the City.

Regarding undergrounding on Augusta Road, Mr. Link stated the City would have more of an opportunity to perform undergrounding if the road is city owned. Mayor White referred to prior taking requests by the City and stated it has always been beneficial to the City.

Downtown Greenville Retail Recruitment

Item was not presented due to lack of time.

Motion - Executive Session

During the open Work Session, Mayor Pro Tem Flemming asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. City Attorney Mike Pitts recommended going into executive session under S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2) negotiations regarding potential land disposition/acquisition near Unity Park and potential land acquisition in the vicinity of Haywood Mall area.

Councilmember Gibson moved, seconded by Councilmember DeWorken, to go into Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously.

(Executive Session)

There being no further discussions, Councilmember Gibson, moved, seconded by Councilmember Stall, to go out of Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously. No action was taken.

With no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Camilla G. Pitman, MMC, Certified PLS
City Clerk

Meeting notice posted on October 8, 2021