

MINUTES

Lowell City Council
Special Meeting
Thursday, February 18, 2021

I. LOWELL CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

Those attending were Mayor Sandy Railey (remote), Councilmember Phil Bonham, Councilmember Ken Ervin, Councilmember Candy Funderburk, Councilmember Shane Robinson, Councilmember Thomas Gillespie, City Manager Scott Attaway, Finance Officer Jared Pyles, Police Chief Scott Bates, Police Officer Jeff Harrison, Parks & Recreation Director Cristy Cummings (remote), and City Clerk Beverly Harris (remote). Guest presenter: Cheryl Brown, The MAPS Group. Facilitators were: Geraldine Gardner, Executive Director, Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) & Kelly Weston, Government Affairs & Member Engagement Coordinator, CCOG.

Mayor Sandy Railey and City Manager Scott Attaway opened with welcoming remarks and introductions. The retreat objectives were to: (1) Continue to build Council relationships to aid decision-making; (2) affirm the City's vision statement and Council core values; (3) review multi-year goals and current financial picture; (4) provide guidance on priorities for FY22 budget development.

Geraldine Gardner and Kelly Weston (facilitators) reviewed the agenda, ground rules, and started with a warm up activity.

The facilitators lead the Council in a session to revisit adjustments to the City's vision, mission, and values proposed during the 2020 retreat and discussed how to proceed.

Next the facilitators lead the Council in an interactive discussion of the City's goals and discussed potential modifications.

Scott Attaway gave a presentation to Council on highlights from the past year, including the implementation progress on City goals. The highlights covered were as follows: 1) Improve water and sewer infrastructure; 2) maintain and improve city streets and sidewalks; 3) develop and update public facilities; 4) enhance community engagement and expand multi-generational programs; and 5) develop a strategic city-wide land use plan that is sustainable.

Mr. Attaway shared a financial outlook presentation and discussed implications for the budget. Current budget figures discussed were: 1) General fund revenues; 2) sanitation revenue; 3) utility franchise tax; 4) sales and use tax; 5) Gaston County tax/tag rates; 6) water/sewer revenues; and 7) stormwater revenue.

Mr. Attaway gave the Council an overview on Stormwater Management Plan and a stormwater fee. He discussed the need for a stormwater fee study to be performed to help the Council determine what the stormwater fee should be and how to incorporate it into the upcoming budget. Mr. Attaway then discussed the proposals received and asked Council for direction.

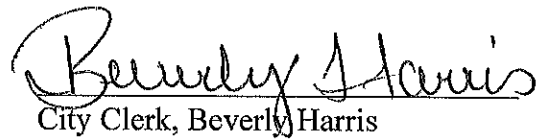
Councilmember Funderburk made a motion to direct staff to award the stormwater fee study to Withers Ravenel, followed by a second from Councilmember Ervin. The vote was unanimous.

The facilitators wrapped up the planning session and discussed items to be carried over to the second planning retreat on March 5, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm and Council took a tour of Gastonia's Franklin Urban Sports & Entertainment District.



Mayor, Sandy Railey



City Clerk, Beverly Harris