Mayor Garrett called the Regular Meeting of the Decatur City Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2020.

PRESENT: Mayor Garrett, Mayor pro tem Powers; and Commissioners Dusenbury, Mayer and Walsh; and, City Manager Arnold.

MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of February 3, 2020 were approved on a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Walsh; and, all voting “aye.”

PROCLAMATION IN HONOR OF MARY FRANCES EARLY. Mayor pro tem Powers presented a proclamation in honor of Mary Frances Early, a resident of the City, who was the first African American to receive a degree from the University of Georgia in 1962. He added that on February 25, 2020, the University of Georgia’s College of Education would be renamed the Mary Frances Early College of Education in honor of Ms. Early.

PRESENTATION. Chair Paul Mitchell presented an overview of the 2020 MLK, Jr. Service project held on January 18, 19 and 20, 2020. Mr. Mitchell stated that over 950 volunteers worked on 32 homes during the three-day event. He thanked staff, contractors and all of the volunteers for their commitment towards the project.

Mayor Garrett thanked Mr. Mitchell for his continued service in the MLK, Jr. Service project since 2003.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ACTION ITEMS. Mayor Garrett opened the public hearing.

Erin Braden, 338 Glenn Circle, commended the work done by the Affordable Housing Task Force and stated that she supported the recommendations in the final report.

Lynn Gathercole, 1169 Oldfield Road, expressed her concerns regarding the recommendations made by the Affordable Housing Task Force.

Annie Godfrey, 128 Garden Lane, thanked the members of the Affordable Housing Task Force for the excellent work they had done and requested the City Commission accept the recommendations of the final report.
Emily Halevy, resident of DeKalb County, spoke in favor of accepting the recommendations made by the Affordable Housing Task Force and emphasized the impact of the proposed recommendations on the entire region.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Garrett closed the public hearing.

**CONTRACT FOR SERVICES WITH DECATUR ARTS ALLIANCE.**

City Manager Arnold recommended that the City Commission authorize the City Manager to execute a “Contract for Services” to provide a $12,000 grant to the Decatur Arts Alliance. She stated that the City and the Decatur Arts Alliance had worked closely together for a number of years to further the City’s strategic plan goals and the goals of the Cultural Arts Master Plan for the purpose of supporting and enhancing the arts and arts education for residents, students, and visitors. She noted that the Decatur Arts Alliance sponsored and organized community events and arts festivals that recognized and supported local artists and enhanced local businesses.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, City Manager Arnold stated that the grant would go directly to the artists whose work was selected.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, City Manager Arnold stated that the City was responsible for maintaining the artwork in a partnership with the Decatur Arts Alliance while it was under the City’s care.

Mayor Garrett stated that a report on the economic benefits of public art shared by Executive Director of Decatur Arts Alliance Angie Macon was very helpful.

On a motion by Commissioner Walsh; second by Mayor pro tem Powers; and, all voting “aye,” the contract for services was authorized as recommended.

**CONTRACT FOR BUILDING ASSESSMENT AT DECATUR LEGACY PARK.**

Planning and Economic Development Director Angela Threadgill requested authorization for the City Manager to execute a contract with Stephen V. Skalko, P.E. & Associates, LLC in the amount of $15,000 and establish a project budget of $17,000. She stated that the contract included performance of field inspections of nineteen buildings at Decatur Legacy Park; identification of 2010 ADA and 2018 Life Safety Code (LSC) items that applied to each building; the identification of 2018 International Building Code (IBC) fire safety items that applied to each building; and, the preparation of a report listing the ADA, LSC & IBC deficiencies for each building. She added that the project was necessary to identify needed building improvements for future budgeting purposes and would identify those buildings that could be occupied with minimal work required. She stated that funding for the project in the amount of $17,000 was included in the Public Facilities Authority (PFA) fund of the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Ms. Threadgill stated that Stephen V. Skalko, P.E. & Associates, LLC would be able to review and point out any existing structural issues.
Mayor Garrett stated that proposed project presented an opportunity for the sound usage of the budget.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Ms. Threadgill stated that the units that were currently occupied by residents of the Decatur Housing Authority would not be included in the proposed project.

Commissioner Dusenbury concurred with Mayor Garrett and expressed an interest to learn more about the work happening at Decatur Legacy Park.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting “aye,” the contract was authorized and the budget was approved as recommended.

**DECATUR AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT.**

Decatur Affordable Housing Task Force Chair Elke Davidson presented the final report on the findings and recommendations for the City’s future housing affordability and inclusivity. She stated that the five core goals of the Task Force were: (1) Administration for the Decatur Affordable Housing Strategy; (2) Preserve Existing Affordable Units; (3) Increase the Supply of Affordable Housing; (4) Revenue Generation; and (5) Community Education and Engagement. She presented the 23 recommendations from the Affordable Housing Task Force report and asked the City Commission to formally recognize the submission of the report.

Mayor Garrett recognized the members of the Task Force who attended the meeting.

Mayor Garrett thanked Ms. Davidson for her leadership.

Mayor Garrett reminded everyone that there would be other opportunities for community participation in future.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Ms. Threadgill explained the next steps that would align with the recommendations of the Affordable Housing Task Force report.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Ms. Threadgill spoke about the role of the Decatur Land Trust.

Ms. Davidson concurred with Ms. Threadgill and stated that reviewing the staffing and funding needs of the Decatur Land Trust would be crucial to the recommendations that were presented.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Lifelong Community Manager Lee Ann Harvey stated that she received several calls and requests for assistance through the MLK, Jr. Service project throughout the year.

Commissioner Walsh noted her appreciation of the priority recommendations presented in the report.
Ms. Davidson shared her experience working with the Affordable Housing Task Force members.

Commissioner Mayer noted her appreciation of the work done towards creating the final report.

In response to a question from Commissioner Mayer, Ms. Davidson stated that the City of Atlanta Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance had been reviewed. She stated that further study was required so that the comparison could be more efficient in terms of scale and the housing market.

In response to a question from Commissioner Mayer, Ms. Davidson explained how the recommendations were structured and ranked.

Commissioner Dusenbury shared his opinions on the priority recommendations.

Commissioner Dusenbury emphasized the need to review some of the larger recommendations and their impact on the community.

Mayor Garrett lauded the work done by every committee and member.

Ms. Davidson acknowledged Planning Intern Kristin Allin for her dedicated efforts towards creating the final report.

On a motion by Commissioner Mayer; second by Commissioner Walsh; and, all voting “aye,” the report from the Decatur Affordable Housing Task Force was accepted.

OLD COURTHOUSE LAWN UPGRADE.

Assistant City Manager David Junger recommended establishment of a project budget of $75,000 and approval of a contract in the amount of $68,210 with Synthetic Turf International of Atlanta, Georgia for the installation of new synthetic turf in the two lawn areas on the Courthouse Square west of the Bandstand. He stated that the benefits of installing synthetic turf would include virtually no maintenance, no watering or mowing, no use of chemicals and fertilizer, and a high tolerance to a heavy foot traffic environment. He stated that the project would be funded using Capital Improvement fund balance, if approved.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Mr. Junger stated that the SoftLawn® system would come with a prorated limited lifetime warranty.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Mr. Junger stated that it would be possible to estimate the amount of money that the City would save by using the synthetic turf.

In response to a question from Commissioner Mayer, Mr. Junger stated that the project could be expected to be completed by late May 2020, if approved.

In response to a question from Commissioner Mayer, Mr. Junger explained the safety features of the product.
On a motion by Commissioner Walsh; second by Mayor pro tem Powers; and, all voting “aye,” the contract was authorized and the budget was approved as recommended.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL MONITORING SERVICE.

Mr. Junger recommended approval of an agreement with KCI Technologies, Inc. of Duluth (formerly GCA, Inc.) in an amount not to exceed $43,200 for monthly traffic signal inspections and monitoring of key intersections within the city limits. He stated that KCI bought GCA and KCI would continue to provide traffic signal services to the City that were previously provided by GCA prior to the recent acquisition. He explained that the monthly inspection process would include verifying the overall operation of the signal equipment including pedestrian devices and vehicular detection equipment, signal illumination and coordination with DeKalb County Traffic Signal Maintenance Division. He added that funds were available for the services in the Design, Environment, and Construction - Street Division budget.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Mr. Junger stated that the Police and Public Works Departments worked together to identify the intersections where traffic signals would be needed.

City Manager Arnold stated that the signals were owned and operated by DeKalb County.

Mr. Junger concurred with City Manager Arnold and reiterated that the agreement was for inspections and monitoring only.

In response to a question from City Manager Arnold, Mr. Junger stated that the acquisition had not caused a change in the staffing at KCI so that city staff were working with the same individuals.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting “aye,” the agreement was approved as recommended.

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS.

Paula Collins, 201 West Ponce de Leon Avenue, voiced her concerns regarding the enforcement of Ordinance O-08-03 that identified graffiti as a public nuisance.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS.

Mayor Garrett read the Zoning Board of Appeals agenda for March 9, 2020.

City Manager Arnold stated that the next City Commission meeting would be held on March 2, 2020.

City Manager Arnold announced a change regarding the Black History Month program organized by the Decatur Business Association on February 25, 2020. She stated that the program would feature local author Nicki Salcedo and Fire Chief Toni Washington.
City Manager Arnold stated that the 20th cohort of Decatur 101 would start meeting on February 27, 2020.

City Manager Arnold stated that the crosswalk on East Ponce de Leon Avenue and Clairemont Avenue would be repainted from March 2, 2020 to March 4, 2020, weather permitting.

Mr. Junger added further comments on the decorative crosswalk painting project.

Commissioner Mayer thanked all the residents for attending the meeting.

Commissioner Mayer assured Ms. Gathercole that her concerns were heard.

Commissioner Mayer invited everyone to the 2020 Oakhurst Wine Crawl on February 29, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

Commissioner Mayer shared her excitement about attending the first annual African American Read-In event on February 25, 2020 at Glenwood Elementary.

Commissioner Dusenbury shared his experience attending the Georgia Municipal Association’s Newly Elected Officials training.

Commissioner Dusenbury offered to reach out to Ms. Collins regarding her concerns about graffiti.

Commissioner Walsh wished her spouse a Happy Birthday.

Commissioner Walsh reminded everyone that the U.S. Olympic Team Trials would be held on February 29, 2020

Mayor pro tem Powers concurred with Commissioner Mayer and stated that community engagement and feedback were an essential part of good governance.

Mayor pro tem Powers invited everyone to the Talley Street Upper Elementary School’s Black History Month program on February 28, 2020 from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Mr. Junger responded to the concerns raised by Ms. Collins.

Mayor Garrett stated that the Arbor Day celebration was successful and more than 70 trees were given away to residents.

Mayor Garrett stated that the Talley Street intersection signal and Scott Boulevard Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) had been activated. She thanked staff for their work on both projects.
Mayor Garrett shared her experience at the Black History Month concert honoring Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson on February 23, 2020 at Eddie’s Attic.

Mayor Garrett thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The City Commission thanked Ms. Davidson, Ms. Threadgill, Ms. Allin and all the members of the Affordable Housing Task Force for volunteering their time towards creating the final report.

The City Commission thanked Mr. Mitchell, Ms. Harvey, House Captain Jabari Cole and all the volunteers for their contribution to the MLK, Jr. Service project.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Meredith Roark
City Clerk