

## MINUTES

### DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

Annual Retreat  
January 7, 2021; 9:00am – 3:00pm  
January 8, 2021; 9:00am – 1:30pm  
Via Zoom Webinar

Mayor Garrett called the Annual Retreat of the Decatur City Commission to order at 9:00am on Thursday, January 7, 2021.

Present: Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers; and Commissioners Dusenbury, Mayer and Walsh.

Staff Present: City Manager Arnold; Deputy City Manager Saxon; Assistant City Managers Harris, Junger and Taylor; City Attorney Bryan Downs; City Clerk Roark; and, Planning and Economic Development Director Threadgill.

The meeting was recessed at 3:00pm.

Mayor Garrett called the meeting to order at 9:00am on Friday, January 8, 2021.

Present: Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers; and Commissioners Dusenbury, Mayer and Walsh.

Staff Present: City Manager Arnold; Deputy City Manager Saxon; Assistant City Managers Harris, Junger and Taylor; City Attorney Bryan Downs; City Clerk Roark; and, Planning and Economic Development Director Threadgill.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm.

A copy of the report of the proceedings follows and is incorporated into these minutes.

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Meredith Roark  
City Clerk

**City of Decatur Commission Retreat**  
**Virtual Zoom Webinar**  
**January 7- January 8, 2021**

**In Attendance**

Patricia Garrett

Tony Powers

Kelly Walsh

George Dusenbury

Lesa Mayer

Andrea Arnold

David Junger

Linda Harris

Teresa Taylor

Angela Threadgill

Meredith Roark

Bryan Downs

Facilitated by: Kelly Jones-Waller, ENGAGE Leadership Solutions, LLC

**The key objectives of this retreat were to:**

- Continue to build team cohesiveness by connecting with each other.
- Review and Reassess best practices in working together as Commissioners and staff.
- Review progress towards 2020 priorities.
- Identify current City of Decatur opportunities that this Commission will address in 2021.

**1. Team Building: Connection & Reflection**

Considering the unprecedented challenges of 2020 and that this was the first year of service for these five Commissioners working together, we began the retreat by reflecting on the roses (successes, wins and celebrations), thorns (challenges and frustrations) and buds (emerging ideas and opportunities) of the past year.

**2. Team Building: Taking A Stand on Racial Justice and Equity**

The Commission was presented with the draft Stand on Racial Justice and Equity created by the City of Decatur Management Team during their 2020 management team retreat. The Commission was asked for thoughts and feedback as the statement is intended to represent views of the City of Decatur regarding racial justice and equity.

Minor tweaks and additions will be made that incorporate the Commissioners' feedback.

### **3. Best Practices for Working Together as a team**

*The team reviewed and updated best practices in working together.*

- Establish regular communication to keep Commissioners informed either through in person meetings with City Manager (with one or two Commissioners) or written updates.
- When staff presents Commissioners with a document, clearly communicate expectations of actions to be taken (i.e. FYI, upcoming vote, acceptance requested, render a decision...etc.).
- Honor chain of command – Commissioners contact City Manager and Senior Leadership Team with requests. Do not go directly to staff.
- If Commissioners are contacted by the media, refer to City Manager or Communications Manager/PIO before responding. The Mayor is the spokesperson for the Commission.
- If you have been approached by the media and give a response as individual Commissioner, inform the City Manager and other Commissioners.
- If Commissioners receive contact regarding a legal matter, refer to City Manager.
- City Manager will inform Commissioners before anything appears in the media.
- Preference to schedule annual Commissioners Retreat in early January during the week.
- When Commissioners receive community requests or concerns, Commissioners to send email to appropriate leadership team member with timing expectations and delivery method of resolution preferred. City Manager should also be copied on this communication.
- When responding to emails do not blind copy, bcc, forward instead to the intended party.
- Seek each other out for one on one for connection and wellness check-ins.

### **4. 2020 Priorities Review**

*The team reviewed and updated progress towards 2020 Priorities. Priorities in process or to continue were moved to 2021 Priorities.*

### **5. 2021 Priorities/Workplan**

*The Commission identified priorities and areas of interest to pursue in 2021 (attached)*

2021 Priorities/Workplan - Next Steps/Actions	Timing 2021
<b>Budget Projections/Limitations</b> Retain flexibility for mid-year budget opportunities.	On-going
<b>Affordable Housing</b> Work session planned for February to present and prioritize what can be accomplished in 2021 including an update on cottage court project.  UDO amendments related to R17 zoning and duplex, triplex, quadplex construction in single-family zoning and community education.	Q1  Q1-Q4
<b>Capital Projects and Prioritization</b> <b>Ebster Field:</b> Meet with Housing Authority to discuss impact of field lighting. Consider Ebster Athletic field improvements in FY 2021-2022 proposed budget.  Complete 1 <sup>st</sup> phase of S. Columbia Drive multi-use trail to 1 <sup>st</sup> driveway at Legacy Park by June 2021. Include sidewalks for part of Derrydown Way in FY 2021-2022 proposed budget.  Complete planning process for Atlanta Avenue railroad crossing improvements and additional traffic calming infrastructure.	Q1  Q2 Q2  Q2
<b>Development-UDO updates, zoning, land use and urban planning educational activity</b> Investigate structures that allow for diverse, often not engaged, community input and exchange of information.  Investigate how to mitigate the negative impacts of development on quality of life.	Q2  Q2
<b>Downtown Master Plan</b> Compile relevant data from Strategic Plan in preparation for future downtown master plan.  Begin the process for the downtown master plan to include releasing RFP.	Q3-Q4  Q3-Q4
<b>Noise Ordinance</b> Conduct broad review of noise ordinance.	Q4
<b>Lawn equipment: (environmental impacts)</b> Revise noise ordinance to be more environmentally sustainable. Review time constraints within the noise ordinance to better support residents' wellbeing.	Q2-3
<b>Tree Ordinance</b> Revise tree ordinance with community input. Present revised ordinance for adoption. Investigate making the tree removal permit visible on the property.	Q2 Q3 Q3
<b>Communication Strategy – Audit</b> Present communication audit findings and recommendations to Commission during January 19 <sup>th</sup> work session.  Launch Decatur 101 virtually.	Q1  Q2

2021 Priorities/Workplan - Next Steps/Actions	Timing 2021
<b>Communication Process</b> Staff to develop system for logging, tracking, and managing communication back to commissioners and residents, includes improving use of the See-Click-Fix tool.	Q2
<b>Legacy Park</b> <b>Postal Pond Project:</b> Consult with professional to assess needs for long term solution.  <b>Invasive Plant Control:</b> Submit RFP for invasive plant control in February 2021.	Q1  Q1
<b>Clean Energy Plan</b> Release RFP for Clean Energy Plan Clean Energy Plan adoption, fall 2021.	Q1 Q3
<b>Seniors - senior school tax exemption, other exemption, storm water fee options</b> Engage with the Dekalb County State legislative delegation for support of senior school tax exemption. Support efforts of the Decatur Board of Education to educate the community about the exemption.  Recommendation for storm water utility fee relief for low-income seniors in February 2021.	Q1  Q2-Q3  Q1
<b>Tax Relief</b> Staff to provide recommendation for broader relief to residential property owners.	Q1
<b>Planning-2030 Strategic Plan and Facilities/Greenspace Master Plan</b> Complete roundtables and Decatur 202 sessions in February 2021. Draft Strategic Plan to be presented at work session May 2021. Strategic plan adoption scheduled for August 2021. Provide monthly Strategic Plan updates.  Initiate Facilities and Greenspace Master Plan.	Q1 Q2 Q3 Q1-Q4  Q3-Q4
<b>Impact Fees</b> Conduct work session. Present final Impact fees ordinance for adoption.	Q2 Q3
<b>Transportation Plan</b> Investigate traffic signal operations ownership as part of the downtown master plan. Conduct sidewalk, trail, and The Path improvements.	Q3-Q4 On-going
<b>Boards and Commissions</b> Review Advisory Board exit interview survey results, advisory board structure, and expectations. Develop a process for boards to actively enhance the pool of diversity among volunteers. Staff and commission to review and update charges.	On-going  Q2 Q3
<b>Public Art Ordinance (Developers)</b> Staff to research and balance within hierarchy of need.	Q4