

**MINUTES
DECATUR CITY COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting
November 6, 2023
City Hall: 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Garrett called the Regular Meeting of the Decatur City Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. on Monday November 6th, 2023.

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

MINUTES of the Executive Session and Regular Meeting of the October 16, 2023, were approved on a motion by Commissioner Dusenbury; second by Commissioner Walsh; and, all voting “aye.”

PROCLAMATION.

Mayor Garrett proclaimed November 25, 2023 as Small Business Saturday in the City of Decatur. She encouraged support of local businesses on that Saturday in particular.

Mayor Garrett proclaimed November 2023 as Native American Heritage Month in the City of Decatur. She encouraged everyone to celebrate the rich cultures of indigenous people by honoring their sacrifices, acknowledging the unique challenges Native Americans face, historically and present; and, celebrating during the month with appropriate programs and activities.

PRESENTATION – COMMISSIONERS’ CAULDRON.

Special Events Coordinator Jackie Moore shared that the winner of the 2023 Commissioners’ Cauldron was the Baumgarten family at 184 Mead Road. Ms. Moore stated that the winners were unable to attend to accept the trophy so she would take it to them.

PRESENTATION – QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT.

Finance Director Russ Madison presented the quarterly financial report for the first quarter of FY 23-24. Mr. Madison outlined the close of the previous fiscal year and explained the General Fund summary of the current fiscal year. He highlighted business taxes and fees as well as the revenue summary. He also provided a brief overview of the Greenspace Fund.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Mr. Madison stated the professional business tax was paid by state licensed professionals and that it was an annual tax.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Mr. Madison explained that the revenue related to Parks & Recreation service fees did not include the fees for Children & Youth Services programming in the prior fiscal year. The Children & Youth Services fees were accounted for in a separate fund until the merger of the Active Living and Children & Youth Services divisions in the current fiscal year.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Mr. Madison stated that expenditures and revenues could be broken out by specific Parks & Recreation functions because there were different budget divisions in the departmental budget.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, City Manager Arnold stated that the upcoming budget season would be an opportunity to provide more detailed information on Parks & Recreation revenues and expenditures and to determine how well the merger and related changes have been working.

Mayor Garrett recognized that there has been increased staffing to support program growth in the Parks & Recreation department.

In response to a question from City Manager Arnold, Mr. Madison stated the financial audit would be presented either with or close to the second quarter financial report.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE.

City Manager Arnold recommended the issuance of an alcoholic beverage license for the retail sale for consumption on premises of beer, wine and spirituous liquors as well as a corking license to Lisandro and Carlos Madrigal for Chando's Tacos at 254 W. Ponce de Leon Avenue. She stated the Police Department had approved the application and all applicable fees had been paid.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Walsh; and, all voting "aye," the license was approved as recommended.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ACTION ITEMS.

Mayor Garrett opened the meeting for public comment.

Lynn Gathercole, 1003 Katie Kerr Drive, stated the realignment of Katie Kerr Drive would be harmful to the surrounding neighborhoods and the City. She stated that she believed a traffic study should be performed first that included public engagement to create a better plan.

Bob Duvall, 824 South Columbia Drive, stated the plan had flaws and that a traffic study needed to be conducted in order to anticipate the impact of the plan. He stated there should be more traffic calming intuitive and the realignment would cause more traffic.

Lauren Dwyer, 527 Hargrove Lane, stated she was the president-elect of the HOA at Hargrove. She stated there was a lack of information about the plan and wished there was more public engagement for the community to be heard. She stated there needed to be a study done to estimate the impact of the realignment.

Nsenga Burton, 923 Katie Kerr Drive, concurred with the previous comments. She added there should have been a survey completed for more engagement.

SOUTH HOUSING VILLAGE PHASE I AGREEMENTS.

City Manager Arnold began by stating that the agenda items did not include the realignment of Katie Kerr Drive. City Manager Arnold stated that a project such as an intersection realignment would not occur without community engagement and she expressed disappointment that there was misinformation to the contrary. City Manager Arnold recommended approval of agreements needed prior to the closing of the Decatur Housing Authority's financing transaction for Phase I of the South Housing Village (SHV) development at Decatur Legacy Park. She stated on November 15, 2021 the City Commission approved an intergovernmental agreement with the Decatur Housing Authority (DHA) to serve as developer of the South Housing Village to include 132 affordable multifamily housing units as envisioned in the 2018 Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan. She stated under the terms of the intergovernmental agreement, the City must enter into a ground lease with the DHA and/or one of its affiliates for the project area as well as enter into an infrastructure agreement, that among other terms, identified the responsible parties for construction and financing of certain infrastructure improvements, as well as specified which improvements would be conveyed to the City upon completion of the project.

City Manager Arnold identified a number of milestones which had occurred over the past two years including financing and acquiring the subject property from the Public Facilities Authority; approval of the final design for the master plan; and, award of low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) applications for phases I and II to the DHA. She stated the City had committed \$3,741,251 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to phases I and II of the development and noted the ARPA funds must be spent by December 31, 2026. She added the City expected to receive an additional \$750,000 through federal community project funding. She stated over the past 11 months, the parties had crafted the agreements needed for the forthcoming closing on the phase I financing. She noted there were four items related to the request and that while she would highlight them jointly, any actions on the recommendations would be taken separately.

City Manager Arnold recommended approval of a Second Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). City Manager Arnold stated during the process of developing the documents leading up to closing, DHA requested terms needed to allow for future recapitalization for the purpose of renovating and revitalizing the property. She stated such future recapitalization might require replacing or extending the ground lease. She added the second amendment also identified the requirements of the parties in case the City did not agree to enter into a new ground lease which may include fair compensation to DHA for its direct investment in the development including capital expenditures made during a specific time period. City Manager Arnold stated due to a handful of incomplete terms, primarily the absence of a maximum amount to be reimbursed for capital expenditures, it was requested that the City Commission authorize the City Attorney and City Manager to make minor changes to the document and subject the changes to ratification at a later date.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated that he wished the red lined version of the previous document was available for the community just so everyone could better understand the process and the new request.

City Manager Arnold recommended approval of a Third Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement clarifying City-funded Infrastructure Improvements. She stated as

the current intergovernmental agreement was written, city-funded infrastructure improvements were limited to those improvements that would be dedicated and conveyed to the City upon project completion. She noted it was probable that the federal funding committed to the project may be greater than the total cost of the improvements to be conveyed to the City, namely, the driveway area that would intersect Katie Kerr Drive at Ashbury Drive and traverse the top portion of the project site. She stated the recommended third amendment to the intergovernmental agreement allowed the City to fund infrastructure improvements within the development that would not be conveyed to the City. She explained that affordable housing, including related infrastructure, was an eligible use of the federal funding being provided through the City.

Commissioner Walsh stated the planned use of the ARPA funds showed the stewardship of the City and the follow through on this project.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated that such funds would not have been available if it were not for ARPA funding for these projects.

City Manager Arnold expressed her appreciation to Congressman Hank Johnson for the additional federal support through community project funding.

Mayor Garrett echoed her appreciation to Congressman Johnson for the federal funding and his understanding of the importance of affordable housing.

City Manager Arnold recommended approval of an Intergovernmental Infrastructure Funding and Development Agreement. She stated the recommended infrastructure funding and development agreement defined the parties' responsibilities regarding construction, installation and funding of infrastructure improvements for the development. She stated the agreement described the construction and other responsibilities related to the driveway area that would be conveyed to the City. She stated the standards and forms required of this portion of the project were consistent with the City's requirements for other roadways built by a developer and conveyed to the City. She added that the agreement also clarified DHA's and/or its affiliates' roles and responsibilities for infrastructure that would not be dedicated or conveyed to the City. She stated DHA's attorneys had requested a change to the language in Exhibit J (Form of Warranty and Assignment of Rights) and the City Attorney and City Manager desired to work with the DHA attorneys and Executive Director on a mutually agreeable solution.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, City Manager Arnold explained that the requirements were the same that had been required of other developers for roads that had been or would be conveyed to the city, regardless of who paid for the improvements. She confirmed that the city had accepted infrastructure in the past that failed and these are precautions to guard against that and ensure that taxpayers are protected from unanticipated expenses.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, City Manager Arnold stated the City had been working with construction attorneys to develop the terms and conditions to protect the City and the resources.

City Manager Arnold recommended approval of a Ground Lease Agreement with Village at Legacy I, LP, pursuant November 15, 2021 Intergovernmental Agreement, contingent upon timely receipt of the Limited Partnership Agreement (LPA) and authorize the City Attorney and City Manager to make minor changes as long as the document remains in substantially similar form and allow any changes deemed necessary in light of provisions in the LPA. She stated the City acquired the approximately 6.5 acre property from the Public Facilities Authority for the purpose developing affordable housing on the site and a separate ground lease was necessary for each of the two phases of the development. She stated the recommended ground lease was for the approximately 2.571 acres of phase I. She added the term of the ground lease was 75 years for an annual rent of \$10, as required by the project investors. She stated during the lease term, the lessee will construct, maintain, repair and manage the property for the purpose of providing decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing. City Manager Arnold stated the City still needed to review the limited partnership agreement referenced in the ground lease and requested that the approval of the ground lease be conditioned on receipt of the limited partnership agreement and any changes necessitated by that agreement. She stated the City was pleased to be moving forward with the Decatur Housing Authority as its development partner and getting closer to both parties' goal of establishing affordable housing at Decatur Legacy Park.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, City Manager Arnold stated there were 66 units in the Phase I of the housing village.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Decatur Housing Authority Executive Director Doug Faust stated DHA planned to close in December 2023 and the project would take approximately 24 months to complete.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Mr. Faust stated the estimated area median income (AMI) was 30% to 60%.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Mr. Faust stated there were different sizes of housing in the plan to accommodate different family sizes.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting "aye," the Second Amendment to Intergovernmental Agreement related to future tax credit recapitalization, and authorizing the City Attorney and City Manager to make minor changes as long as the document remains in substantially similar form and subject to ratification of the specific dollar amount in Section 5.1.C.(2)b.(ii)(b) at a later date was approved as recommended.

On a motion by Commissioner Walsh; second by Mayor pro tem Powers; and, all voting "aye," the Third Amendment to Intergovernmental Agreement clarifying City-funded Infrastructure Improvements was approved as recommended.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting "aye," approval of Intergovernmental Infrastructure Funding and Development Agreement pursuant November 15, 2021 Intergovernmental Agreement was approved, and the City Attorney and City Manager were authorized to modify Exhibit J in the document if a mutually agreeable solution could be reached.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Dusenbury; and all voting “aye,” the Ground Lease Agreement with Village at Legacy I, LP, pursuant November 15, 2021 Intergovernmental Agreement, contingent upon timely receipt of the Limited Partnership Agreement (LPA) was approved and the City Attorney and City Manager were authorized to make minor changes as long as the document remains in substantially similar form and allow any changes deemed necessary in light of provisions in the LPA.

CONTRACTS FOR DESIGN-BUILD SERVICES AT EBSTER FIELD.

Capital Projects Manager Hugh Saxon recommended approval of a design and pre-construction budget of \$140,000 for the Ebster Field improvements; approval of an agreement for design-build services in the amount of \$50,580 to Precision Turf LLC alongside its design partner Breedlove Land Planning of Atlanta; and, approval of an agreement with AJB Construction Group for program management services in the amount of \$73,540. Mr. Saxon stated the recommendation would provide for design and other pre-construction services for the project, which included conversion of Ebster Field from a natural to synthetic turf surface and installation of new LED athletic field lighting. He stated the project budget of \$1.75 million had been approved in the FY 2023-24 Capital Improvement Fund budget.

Mr. Saxon explained the design-build method employed a combined contractor-designer team for a project delivery approach that should help shorten the construction schedule and provide better control over budget. He stated Ebster Field was intensively used year-round for a wide range of community activities and athletics by the Parks & Recreation Department and the City Schools of Decatur. He added it was subject to significant wear and tear, especially during wet weather, and was difficult to maintain at a high level. He stated the proposed lighting would allow more use during late afternoons and early evenings in late fall, winter and early spring. He noted conversion of the field to synthetic turf and adding lighting was a recommendation in the *Recreatur* parks & recreation master plan.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Mr. Saxon stated that a private firm maintains the natural grass fields. He stressed the difficulty of maintaining grass fields at a high level because of the demand for use. He stated they are exploring the use of natural materials along with padding under the synthetic turf field which would make the field cooler, more resilient and safer.

In response to the question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Mr. Saxon stated he would be meeting with DHA to discuss the lighting component of the project. He added the lights were proposed to be downward facing and would likely have a set cutoff time.

Commissioner Walsh expressed her appreciation for the work on the project. She added that this was about providing more field access since it was one of the most heavily used fields in the City.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Mr. Saxon stated there would be accommodations with the use of the fields by the school system.

Commissioner Dusenbury stated he was glad to hear about the natural materials and cooler temperatures on the field.

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

On a motion by Commissioner Walsh; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting “aye,” the agreement with Precision Turf, LLC was approved as recommended.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Dusenbury; and, all voting “aye,” the agreement for program management services with AJB Construction Group was approved as recommended.

BETTER TOGETHER ADVISORY BOARD CHARTER UPDATES.

Assistant City Manager Linda Harris and Equity and Engagement Director Renae Jackson recommended approval of updates to the 2016 Better Together Advisory Board Charter. Ms. Harris stated the updates were based on the ongoing work of the Board and the strong commitment to equity and racial justice that was an overarching goal in the city’s 2020 Strategic Plan. She presented the six amendments to the charter.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated that this was a great way for the Board to evolve in order to find ways for the members to tap into things happening in the City. He added that there was great value in having a youth member on the Board.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting “aye,” the updates to the Better Together Advisory Board charter were approved as recommended.

DECATUR LAND TRUST FUNDING REQUEST.

Planning and Economic Development Director Angela Threadgill speaking as staff liaison to the Decatur Land Trust (DLT) requested consideration for funding for operations and down payment assistance of the DLT. Ms. Threadgill introduced DLT Board Chair Linda Curry and Board Secretary Alan McNabb to present the formal request.

Ms. Curry presented the critical needs of the DLT in order to continue to work efficiently and to continue to grow the initiatives. She stated the request for funding in the amount of \$377,395 over a three-year period would assist with those needs.

Mayor Garrett reiterated the requested amount was made up of a multi-year request and an amount for down payment assistance. She added that the funding request could be considered in separate parts and be voted on individually rather than the whole amount.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated he was a part of the early years of the formation of the Decatur Education Foundation (DEF). He stated that if it were not for initial seed funding DEF would not be as self-sufficient as it was in current times. He made the same comparison with the

City and the funding for Legacy Decatur. He added that these steps were necessary for the DLT to start to function effectively and independently.

Mayor Garrett suggested breaking up the three-year period so it could become a part of the normal budgeting process starting in FY 24-25.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, City Manager Arnold stated that consideration of funding requests for non-profit entities was typically a part of the annual budget process and that the City Commission could grant this amount as an amendment to the budget, if approved tonight. City Manager Arnold added funding outside the annual budget process did not happen often.

Mayor Garrett requested if the funding was to be granted, the DLT would be expected to provide an annual report to the City Commission of its performance and activities completed with the funding.

In response to questions from Commissioner Dusenbury, Ms. Curry stated there were nine housing units currently available for sale by the DLT. She added there were six cottages at the Oak Cottage Court project and three condominium units at 108 Park Place project. Ms. Curry stated the Board had an executive director for about 10 months, working an average of 30 hours a week. Ms. Curry stated there was at least one grant application submitted. She added there was grant software the Board did not have that was important for the process.

Commissioner Dusenbury acknowledged the work the DLT Board had completed thus far to stand up the non-profit organization.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Ms. Threadgill stated the previous interim executive director was brought on when the organization gained 501(c)(3) status.

Ms. Curry stated that down payment assistance was needed for low- to moderate-income buyers to fill the gap in the current residential real estate market with such high interest rates.

Commissioner Dusenbury expressed concern about the small scale of the DLT. Commissioner Dusenbury expressed his support of the need for down payment assistance but questioned the strategy of the DLT.

Commissioner Walsh stated this work was critical to address affordability in the City. She stated that this was a catalyst moment. She noted the addition of the executive director was needed but there would always be an issue of scale. She stated her support of an additional staff member to fundraise and apply for grants.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Commissioner Mayer speaking as the City Commission's liaison to the DLT, stated there was urgency when it came to hiring for two different roles. Commissioner Mayer stated they could contract with a consultant to apply

for grants during the upcoming grant cycle that occurs at the beginning of the year, while they search for an executive director.

Commissioner Walsh clarified that it was a sequencing issue because the executive director would fill a larger gap as it related to the organization.

Commissioner Dusenbury stated the grant writer and executive director should be separate roles as both were large tasks to take on.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Ms. Threadgill stated that the provision of the inclusionary housing ordinance and its enforcement fell under the Community and Economic Development Department. She confirmed that the cottage court subdivision recently approved at 258 Forkner Drive was subject to the inclusionary housing ordinance and that one cottage must be set aside as an inclusionary unit. She added that the developer, since it was a for-sale product, would have an agreement with the DLT to find qualified buyers and also place a deed restriction at the time of initial sale. The DLT played a critical role in for-sale inclusionary units among the private sector projects.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Ms. Threadgill confirmed the DLT and the executive director would oversee the ReHAB Program.

Mayor Garrett stated the City Commission was not being asked to approve the DLT budget, only for the estimated request for funding. She stated her reservation of the whole request and that parts of the request were reasonable. Mayor Garrett stated perhaps the DLT could take a regional approach and partner with other land trusts.

Commissioner Mayer stated the City created the DLT as a part of the Strategic Plan to address housing affordability in the City. She noted there had been a lot of growth and momentum for the DLT and the request for funding was the next step necessary for it to take.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Commissioner Mayer stated it was possible for the grant writer to get a grant for down payment assistance.

Commissioner Mayer stressed the importance of down payment assistance especially because of the challenging interest rate environment and high housing costs.

Ms. Threadgill stated the anticipated sales prices for the six cottages ranged from \$199,000 to \$305,000, but that final sales prices would be determined in January 2024 when construction was near completion.

Ms. Threadgill stated the request for down payment assistance would be a portion of what was ultimately needed for the future buyers. She stated efforts were needed to pool resources to obtain the full assistance needed. She stated that Decide DeKalb had down payment assistance for homebuyers in DeKalb County and that development partner Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership also had access to down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Ms. Threadgill confirmed that the City's contribution would be a part of what was actually needed and that the amount requested would be split between the nine available units for purchase by qualified buyers.

Commissioner Mayer stated the funds were a portion of what was needed to make the down payment affordable but not paying for all of it.

On a motion by Commissioner Dusenbury; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting "aye," the request for \$75,000 for down payment assistance was approved.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Mayor pro tem Powers stated funding requests for the DLT should be considered during future annual budgets and assess their financial needs.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting "aye," the request for consideration of payments to the Decatur Land Trust in future City budgeting processes was approved.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Commissioner Mayer stated the cost of a consultant could potentially be more than the proposed amount. She stated the requested amount was much less than what the Board had proposed. She added there were many costs to get the DLT up and running. She noted any unused funds would be used to progress initiatives for affordability by the DLT.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Commissioner Mayer stated this funding would just be for FY 23-24.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Commissioner Mayer stated the salary of the executive director would be between \$75,000-\$100,000 annually and that the additional funds that were requested are for operational costs of the DLT.

Commissioner Dusenbury stated when similar organizations were formed, there was a year over year decrease in funding until the organization reached financial independence.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Commissioner Mayer stated the June date was for the City's fiscal year. She added the DLT would come back with more requests in June for the next fiscal year.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Commissioner Mayer stated the request was not only for salary.

City Manager Arnold stated the upcoming budget process would allow the DLT to make any further requests that may be needed for the next fiscal year and they would be needed by March 2024 rather than June 2024.

In response to a question from City Manager Arnold, Commissioner Mayer stated the expectation would be a step down process as it related to funding from the City.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated this was not a losing proposition. He added he wanted a clearer path forward in the future but this was what DLT needed to continue to move forward now.

Commissioner Mayer stated the plan was concrete and allowed the organization to move forward now and be able to pay an executive director.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Commissioner Mayer stated there was potential to hire a consulting firm if an executive director had not been hired.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Commissioner Mayer stated there was a model based on other partnerships the City has entered into with other non-profits.

Commissioner Mayer stated that it baffled her that there had not been funding previously for the DLT as it had been created by the City.

On a motion by Commissioner Mayer; second by Mayor pro tem Powers; and, Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers; and, Commissioners Mayer and Walsh voting “aye,” and Commissioner Dusenbury voting “nay,” a payment in the amount of \$152,395 for FY 2023-2024 was granted to the Decatur Land Trust, per the November 2, 2023 funding request memorandum.

CITY FACILITY LED LIGHTING UPGRADES.

Assistant Public Works Director Felix Floyd recommended approval of agreements with Georgia Power in the amount of \$70,550.59 and establishment of a project budget in the amount of \$80,000 for LED lighting upgrades at municipal buildings. Mr. Floyd stated in October 2023, City staff requested quotes for LED lighting upgrades and fixture installations at eleven municipal buildings through Georgia Power’s Small Commercial Direct Install Program. He added in this program, Georgia Power’s selected contractor, FCI Management (FCI), conducted no-cost assessments of indoor and select outdoor lighting fixtures for LED upgrades.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Mr. Floyd stated the existing lights could be replaced with current bulb models but the LED lights were more energy efficient.

Mr. Floyd provided clarification to the recommendation because 2 sites had been inadvertently left off of the memorandum.

On a motion by Commissioner Walsh; second by Mayor pro tem Powers; and, all voting “aye,” the agreement was authorized and the project budget was established as recommended.

WARMING CENTER MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

Business Development Manager Shirley Baylis recommended approval of a memorandum of understanding with Frontline Response International, Inc. in the amount of \$174,082 to continue a cold weather warming center. Ms. Baylis stated there was a need to

partner with Frontline Response for a second year to provide relief to the unhoused population from extreme cold weather events.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Frontline Response Senior Director of Programs Betty Tezera stated they were still figuring out when exactly the case management would happen in the morning. She explained that during the previous year the case management occurred after drop off at 9 a.m. at the DeKalb Library in Decatur but that this year case management would be offered at dinner when they are dropped off at Frontline's building.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Ms. Tezera stated 47 people had expressed interest in case management last year but that no placements made from those who were interested.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Ms. Tezera noted the contract stated 10 men and 10 women and children. She added that there would be an opportunity to open up 40 beds. She stated the capacity increased with a partnership with DeKalb County but the beds for Decatur had been set aside.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Ms. Tezera stated the cost increase was due to budgeting for transportation with two vans, holiday pay for staff, and to account for an increase in prices due to inflation.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Ms. Tezera stated during the Christmas holidays last winter we experienced an extreme cold weather event so there were more people working and measures were taken to protect the unhoused from the winter weather.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Ms. Tezera stated there were 37 cold nights under the previous MOU.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Ms. Tezera stated Decatur had 20 beds solidified and with DeKalb County there would be 60 beds total including Decatur.

In response to a question from City Manager Arnold, Ms. Tezera confirmed that a new fire suppression system had been installed that allowed Frontline to expand the occupied space.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Ms. Baylis stated that some unhoused individuals simply want a warm bed on a cold night and that longer term housing and resources were not a priority. She added some of the long-term resources were shared and taken advantage of with Frontline's Wednesday programming for case management.

Commissioner Dusenbury expressed concern about the high cost of the program and suggested that those funds could be better used to make a longer term impact on the unhoused population beyond short-term shelter. In response to a question from Commissioner Dusenbury, Ms. Tezera stated the cold weather was a health concern because people could freeze to death. She stated she understood his concern and would look into the cost and how to find solutions for long-term housing.

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

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS.

Mayor Garrett opened the meeting for requests and petitions.

Justin Lawrence, 534 Hargrove Lane, stated there was an oversight in the realignment of Katie Kerr Drive and that the City needed to address its plan to include the addition of the Hargrove neighborhood. He requested that more greenspace or even a dog park be added at the lot on the corner of Katie Kerr Drive.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS.

Tourism Manager Sherry Jackman requested permission to use the City logo on chocolate bars for the City’s Bicentennial celebration as well as for promotion of the City.

On a motion by Commissioner Walsh; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all voting “aye,” permission was granted to the Decatur Tourism Bureau to use the city logo on locally produced chocolate bars.

Mayor Garrett read the agenda for the November 13, 2023 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers; second by Commissioner Dusenbury; and, all voting “aye,” Resolution R-23-21 confirming the Executive Session of October 16, 2023 was adopted.

Assistant City Manager Cara Scharer announced there were going to be two meetings to discuss work on South McDonough Street.

City Manager Arnold stated City Hall would be closed on November 10 from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. for an internal work day.

City Manager Arnold officially announced Ms. Scharer as the new Assistant City Manager for Public Works as of November 6, 2023.

Commissioner Mayer thanked the City Commission for its continued commitment to affordable housing in the City.

Commissioner Mayer apologized for the confusion of residents thinking the realignment of Katie Kerr Drive was on the agenda.

Commissioner Mayer thanked staff for its tireless work and dedication to projects and initiatives happening in the City.

Commissioner Mayer stated there was still a need for continued dialogue about traffic safety in the City.

Commissioner Dusenbury apologized for the confusion about the inclusion of the roadway realignment for the South Housing Village agenda action item.

Commissioner Dusenbury stated he wanted more data for right on red areas on the City.

Commissioner Dusenbury shared he thought the proclamation for Native American History month was great and that it would be great to have that lens with the 200 Stories project.

Commissioner Dusenbury expressed appreciation to the Better Together Advisory Board Charter for bringing forward changes to its Charter to better fit with its stated mission and work plan.

Commissioner Dusenbury reminded the community that November 7 was Election Day.

Commissioner Walsh shared she appreciated the conversations during the meeting and that the City was able to talk the talk and figure out its fiduciary responsibility with the Decatur Land Trust. She stated that the work with DHA was just a snapshot of the work that had been done for affordable housing.

Commissioner Walsh stated the Decatur High School girls cross country team had won the State Championship, resulting in back to back titles.

Mayor pro tem Powers shared that the week of November 6 was Crossing Guard Appreciation Week.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated the Decatur Wine Festival occurred on November 4 and was a huge success.

Mayor pro tem Powers encouraged everyone to go vote on November 7 as there were several City and County initiatives on the ballot.

Mayor Garrett echoed the encouragement to get out and vote since there were important items on the ballot.

Mayor Garrett stated Leadership Georgia would be in Decatur the weekend of November 9 for its annual member event.

Mayor Garrett reminded the community that the next City Commission meeting would be held on November 27 rather than on November 20, 2023.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:36 p.m.

Meredith Roark
City Clerk