

**MINUTES
DECATUR CITY COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting
April 1, 2024
City Hall: 7:30 p.m.

Mayor pro tem Powers called the Regular Meeting of the Decatur City Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 1, 2024.

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

ABSENT: Mayor Garrett.

MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of March 18, 2024 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Mayer; second by Commissioner Dusenbury; and, all present voting “aye.”

PROCLAMATION.

Mayor pro tem Powers recognized April 2024 as Earth Month.

SPECIAL EVENT ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE.

City Manager Arnold recommended issuance of a temporary special event beer and wine license to Amplify My Community for Amplify Music Festival on April 12 and 13, 2024. City Manager Arnold stated Special Events Coordinator Jackie Moore would typically present this type of special event license, but the event was quickly approaching, and Ms. Moore was out of town. City Manager Arnold stated that the approval of the license was recommended.

On a motion by Commissioner Walsh; second by Commissioner Mayer; and, all present voting “aye,” the license was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ACTION ITEMS.

Mayor pro tem Powers opened the meeting for public comment.

Due to technical difficulties, City Manager Arnold read an email from Stacey Watkins, 102 Champlain Street. Ms. Watkins wrote there was lack of neighborhood involvement and communication around the intersection improvements at Huron and Champlain Streets and she expressed her opposition to the improvements. She added there should be other options other than the permanent median.

City Manager Arnold read an email from John Kylie, 231 Huron Street. In the email, Mr. Kylie expressed his concerns about the removal and replanting of the trees in the right-of-way. He raised concern about the raised permanent median.

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS AT HURON AND CHAMPLAIN STREETS.

Assistant City Manager Cara Scharer recommended approval of a plan for intersection improvements at Huron and Champlain Streets, and approval of a grant agreement with the

Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD) for \$350,000 in support of the project. Ms. Scharer stated the intersection improvements at Huron and Champlain Streets were a priority project identified in the 2018 Community Transportation Plan. She stated the large radius on the southeast corner of the intersection encouraged right turns at high speeds, while southbound traffic on Huron Street cut the corner when turning onto Champlain Street. She added the scale of the intersection made it difficult for pedestrians who were crossing the street. She stated the plan utilized green infrastructure recommended by the 2020 Storm Water Master Plan and the 2020 Strategic Plan to narrow the approaches and tighten the turning radii and included installation of two high visibility crosswalks.

Arborist Kay Evanovich stated not all the trees would be removed, only the ones close to the sidewalk. Arborist Evanovich added the maple trees could be relocated to another right-of-way or to Decatur Legacy Park.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Ms. Evanovich stated the trees were planted five or six years ago.

Ms. Scharer stated the use of green infrastructure in the improvements helped make the project eligible for funding from GAEPD. She stated the project included a bioretention basin that supported several goals of Georgia's Statewide Nonpoint Source Management Plan and helped advance the City's own storm water management and environmental public awareness objectives. She stated the bioretention basin was designed to collect surface runoff from a total drainage area of 1.2 acres, including street rights-of-way and residential yards. She stated the project would reduce impervious surface coverage in the neighborhood and divert and treat storm water before it discharged into the tributary of South Fork Peachtree Creek. She added the bioretention basin included traffic calming, ecological benefits from native plantings, and heat island reduction. Ms. Scharer stated the GAEPD had committed \$350,000 from the Federal 319H grant program and the city would contribute approximately \$235,000 for a total estimated project cost of \$585,000. She stated it was anticipated the project would be bid in June 2024.

Commissioner Dusenbury expressed his appreciation for the use of tactical urbanism to test the raised median before installing a permanent median. He added his appreciation for removing impervious area and replacing with a pervious planted area.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated the curve at that intersection was dangerous for the pedestrians that crossed that corridor especially with an increase in traffic volume over the last several years. He added the green infrastructure alone with the grant was a win for the City.

Commissioner Walsh thanked the neighbors of the project for their comments. She added it was great the 2018 Community Transportation Plan outlined improvements to the curve at this intersection. She added testing the tactical infrastructure was a good approach before adding anything permanent.

On a motion by Commissioner Dusenbury; second by Commissioner Walsh; and, all present voting "aye," the improvements was approved.

LOGO LICENSE AGREEMENT.

Ms. Scharer recommended approval of a license agreement with Decatur FC to use the City of Decatur logo on the team's jerseys and other team gear. She stated under the terms of the

license, to protect the integrity of the logo, only the jerseys would be sold to fans and use beyond the jerseys must be approved by the City Manager. She stated the Decatur FC was a newly formed semi-pro women's soccer team participating this summer in the Women's Professional Soccer League (WPSL). She added the community could expect four regular season home games and one exhibition game played at the Decatur High School Stadium and a total of 9 games this season, not including playoffs. Ms. Scharer stated approval was recommended of a one-year license agreement with an option for two, one-year renewals for the limited use of the City of Decatur logo and waiver of the licensing fee as an in-kind sponsorship of the Decatur FC.

Commissioner Dusenbury expressed his excitement about the Decatur FC.

Commissioner Walsh expressed her excitement on the team's addition to the City.

On a motion by Commissioner Dusenbury; second by Commissioner Walsh; and, all present voting "aye," the agreement was approved.

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS.

There were no requests or petitions.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS.

Mayor pro tem Powers read the agenda for the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on April 8, 2024.

Mayor pro tem Powers read the agenda for the Planning Commission meeting on April 9, 2024.

Energy and Sustainability Manager David Nifong gave an update on Georgia Power's 2023 Integrated Resource Plan. He stated Georgia Power was experiencing significant load growth from such industries as data centers and battery manufacturing and was seeking to add power capacity via additional generation from fossil fueled generators at existing plants and purchasing power from adjacent power companies or providers. He added they pushed for a virtual power plant. He explained a virtual power plant was a system that distributed energy resources including rooftop solar and battery energy that would provide for several grid services.

In response to a question from City Manager Arnold, Mr. Nifong stated the final vote by the Public Service Commission would be taken on April 16.

In response to a question from City Manager Arnold, Mr. Nifong stated the virtual power plant program recommendation to the Public Service Commission (PSC) was for Georgia Power to do more research and bring back to the PSC a full plan for consideration.

Mr. Nifong stated it was staff's recommendation to join the Department of Energy's Better Climate Challenge. He stated by joining the challenge it would set a target to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by scope one and scope two emission sources by at least 50% in the next 10 years. He added by joining the challenge the City would have access to technical assistance and extra resources from the Department of Energy for clean energy goals.

Mr. Nifong reported the City of Decatur and DeKalb County were selected to be a joint host site for a Department of Energy Community Energy Fellow. He added the fellow would help support the implementation of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant projects such as residential energy efficiency and weatherization projects.

Commissioner Mayer stated she had no closing remarks.

Commissioner Dusenbury expressed his enjoyment on the focus on climate sustainability. He encouraged those trying to make an impact on the environment to plant a tree.

Commissioner Walsh shared her enjoyment with the robust work sessions.

Commissioner Walsh stated State Representatives Mary Margret Oliver and Omari Crawford hosted the Decatur High School Girl's Cross Country team at the Capitol before the 2024 legislative session ended.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated since he was absent for the previous meeting, he wanted to share his thoughts on the issue of affordable housing development. He stated there was a large need for more workforce housing and affordable housing within the City.

Mayor pro tem Powers congratulated the recent graduates of Decatur 101.

Mayor pro tem Powers stated the Amplify concerts were coming up on April 12th and 13th and that spring had finally arrived.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Meredith Roark
Chief of Staff (City Clerk)