

MINUTES

DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
August 7, 2017
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, August 7, 2017.

PRESENT: Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Boykin; Commissioners Drake and Smith; and, City Manager Merriss.

ABSENT: Commissioner Powers.

MINUTES: On a motion by Mayor pro tem Boykin, second by Commissioner Drake; and, Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Boykin; and, Commissioner Drake voting “aye,” the minutes were approved. ¹

Mayor Garrett recognized members of Boy Scout members Troop 18 who attended the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ACTION ITEMS.

William Floyd, 12 Candler Grove Drive, spoke in support of the increase in compensation for the City Commissioners. He also spoke in support of the LED lights for the parking deck.

ORDINANCE INCREASING ELECTED OFFICIAL COMPENSATION.

City Manager Merriss recommended adoption of Ordinance O-17-11 to increase the annual compensation for the Mayor to \$15,000 and the compensation for the Mayor pro tem and City Commissioners at \$12,000 effective January 1, 2018. City Manager Merriss stated that the recommended change had to be advertised for three separate weeks and out of an abundance of caution the notice was printed for four weeks. She stated the increase would be effective after the next municipal election.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake; and, Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Boykin; and, Commissioners Drake and Smith voting “aye,” Ordinance O-17-11 was adopted.

AMENDMENT TO THE PAY AND CLASSIFICATION PLAN.

Assistant City Manager David Junger recommended adoption of a resolution to amend the Pay and Classification Plan to consolidate two authorized positions. He stated that the positions of supply clerk and facilities security coordinator would be consolidated into one position of security planner and procurement administrator.

Commissioner Smith thanked Mr. Junger for reviewing the two positions.

Mayor Garrett also thanked Mr. Junger and the staff for evaluating the positions.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake; and, Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Boykin; and, Commissioners Drake and Smith voting “aye” the amendment was adopted as recommended.

¹ Commissioner Smith did not vote as he was not present at the July 17, 2017 meeting.

ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SCHOOL FUND MILLAGE RATE LEVY.

City Manager Merriss recommended adoption of Ordinance O-17-12 levying the School Fund Millage Rate at 18.66 mills.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake; and, Mayor Garrett, Mayor pro tem Boykin and Commissioners Drake and Smith voting “aye,” the ordinance was adopted as recommended.

AUTHORIZATION TO REACTIVATE GEORGIA FUND 1 ACCOUNT.

City Manager Merriss recommended adoption of a resolution to authorize the reactivation of a Georgia Fund I local government investment pool account with the Office of the State Treasurer, State of Georgia. City Manager Merriss stated that the resolution would authorize deposit of funds from the recent bond sale and other funds associated with the purchase and improvements to the United Methodist Children’s Home to the Georgia Fund 1 local government investment pool. She stated it was anticipated that all but approximately \$500,000 of the proceeds would be disbursed when the real estate purchase was completed in mid-August, 2017; and, that the remaining \$500,000 would be used to upgrade the playing fields at the United Methodist Children’s Home and would be spent over the next 12-18 months.

On a motion by Commissioner Drake, second by Commissioner Smith; and, Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Boykin; and, Commissioners Drake and Smith voting “aye,” the resolution was adopted as recommended.

AWARD OF BID FOR LED LIGHTING DECATUR CONFERENCE CENTER PARKING GARAGE.

Mr. Junger recommended establishment of a project budget of \$84,000 and award of a bid in the amount of \$76,404 for upgrading the lighting in the Decatur Conference Center Parking Garage to Mayberry Electric, Inc. of Atlanta, GA. Mr. Junger stated there had been complaints about the parking garage lighting and he worked with Assistant City Manager Lyn Menne on this project. He stated this would provide much better lighting, be more reliable and eliminate shadowy corners. He also stated that there would be the appropriate amount of emergency LED fixtures that would run in case there was a power outage.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Boykin, Mr. Junger stated that he did not have specific numbers but the return on the investment should be less than one year.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett Mr. Junger stated that the old lights would be recycled.

In response to a question from Commissioner Drake, Ms. Menne stated that a new sign would be put up on the Conference Center that read “Decatur Conference Center.”

In response to a question from Commissioner Drake, Mr. Junger stated that vehicle break-ins did not happen often and it was not a high crime area.

Ms. Menne stated that the conference center parking manager had been tasked with researching security cameras options.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake; and, Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Boykin; and, Commissioners Drake and Smith voting “aye,” the project budget and bid award were approved as recommended.

AGREEMENT FOR TREE REMOVAL AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES.

City Arborist Kay Evanovich recommended approval of an agreement with Gunnison Tree Specialists for tree removal and maintenance services at Decatur Cemetery in the amount of \$18,150. She stated the work included removal of three dead, hazardous trees; pruning of other trees; and stump grinding. Ms. Evanovich also identified the need to prune an additional 70 mature trees in the Cemetery to mitigate hazards and to improve tree health and appearance. She stated that much of this pruning would be proactive maintenance and would address large dead branches, structural defects and disease. She noted that the mulch generated by the pruning and stump grinding would be retained by the City and would be spread around the existing root areas of the trees.

Mayor pro tem Boykin remarked that the proactive pruning should assist in reducing the number of falling of tree branches and mitigate the City's risk.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Ms. Evanovich stated that the work would start within the week if approved.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake; and, Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Boykin; and, Commissioners Drake and Smith voting "aye," the agreement was approved as recommended.

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS.

Timothy Martin, 1009 Braeburn Lane, stated that he would like to hear about the process to maintain the Hidden Cove Park and Trail between the community, city, and the school system.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS.

Mayor Garrett read the Zoning Board of Appeals agenda for August 14, 2017.

City Manager Merriss recognized Police Sergeant Richard Phillips who was attending the meeting as a member of the E5 Leadership Academy.

In response to Mr. Martin's request, City Manager Merriss stated that getting schools open was the priority and the timing of tree situation was unfortunate. She stated that what happened was consistent with the City's established protocol. She added that City Schools of Decatur and the City had a strong working relationship and she would be glad to go over how the City and City Schools cooperated on a regular basis.

Commissioner Smith thanked DeKalb County CEO Michael Thurmond for talking with the City Commission during the work session.

Commissioner Smith thanked City staff for dealing with issues to get the kids to school safely.

Commissioner Smith thanked staff for doing the research around the increased compensation for the City Commission and stated seeing the data was very important and helpful.

Commissioner Drake thanked DeKalb County CEO Michael Thurmond for coming to the work session. He stated that he received a sense that some positive changes were coming and Mr. Thurmond seemed to have a plan to resolve many long-standing County issues.

Commissioner Drake thanked City staff for their back to school preparation efforts.

Commissioner Drake thanked the City for being proactive with the trees.

Mayor pro tem Boykin stated that it was nice that the City was being proactive with the trees. He also stated he was sorry about the tree situation at Hidden Cove Park near Westchester Elementary.

Mayor pro tem Boykin congratulated Sergeant Phillips on his recent promotion.

Mayor Garrett extended a welcome to the Boy Scouts and Sergeant Phillips.

Mayor Garrett thanked DeKalb County CEO Michael Thurmond and stated he was really trying to work hard with cities.

Mayor Garrett stated that the Decatur BBQ, Blue, and Bluegrass festival would be August 12, 2017.

Mayor Garrett stated that August 15, 2017 would be City Hall Selfie Day and encouraged people to take pictures in front of the City Hall or any municipal building.

Mayor Garrett wished City Manager Merriss happy birthday.

Mayor Garrett shared that there were processes in place to deal with tree removal; however, the timing of the incident was not ideal and that she appreciated Mr. Martin's concerns.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Peggy Merriss
Acting City Clerk