

**CITY OF GRIFFIN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP
ONE GRIFFIN CENTER, W. ELMER GEORGE MUNICIPAL HALL
TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2015**

1

Chairperson Doug Hollberg presided, calling the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Joanne Todd, Cynthia Reid-Ward, Cora Flowers, Rodney McCord, Dick Morrow and Rodney McCord attended. Absent was Commissioner Ryan McLemore. Also present were City Manager Kenny L. Smith, City Attorney Andrew J. Whalen, III, and Teresa Watson to record minutes.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3(4), consider entering Executive Session for the purpose of discussing and acting upon the acquisition of real estate.

Motion/second by Commissioners Morrow/McCord to enter Executive Session at 9:01 am carried 6-0. Motion/second by Commissioners Morrow/Todd to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene to Open Meeting at 9:32 am carried 6-0.

Update the Board on the ongoing discussions and negotiations between AT&T and Itron, for the turn down of 2G communication and AMI meter solutions. *Electric Director Bill Bosch to address.*

Bill Bosch provided a brief update, noting that not too much detail is available at the present time. This cellular system has been fully operational for three years since the purchase. SmartSynch was the original seller, and we had to contract had AT&T who in turn contracted with SmartSynch rather than the City. SmartSync has now been sold, so we are negotiating with AT&T and Itron; both have been very helpful and there are some positives, such as Meter Data Management which has a cost approximating \$1 million but is being included by Itron for free. They also took \$1.6 million off the price. We should have a better picture within the next 2-3 months. Originally we had budgeted \$5.2 million for the project and should come close to that number. Negotiating is the only thing left to do as we have explored other options. Originally the 2G communications system was guaranteed in the contract for 10 years, but with that company being bought out, complications arose. However, we are working through the process well. He answered questions from the Board and explained that the City had explored other options but took them off the table. We also must change meters and negotiate a price for that. The best course appears to be to simply negotiate through it. This system has been accurate, reliable, and dependable and we hate to have to do this. The possibility of spreading financing over a period of time is being discussed. They are making concessions that will allow some aspects not available today so some positives in the future.

Commissioner Morrow thanked Griffin Power and Bill Bosch for the energy audit they came out and did for the Health Department. The previous \$6000 per month was a heavy utility billing, but the bill is now around \$4000 per month. They relay their appreciation to Griffin Power.

At its 2015 General Session, the General Assembly enacted a new law governing the possession, sale, and use (explosion) of a class of fireworks, defined as "consumer fireworks", which will impact local governments. Attached is a Memorandum summarizing the law as it relates to local regulation. *City Attorney Drew Whalen will address.*

This will be an item on tonight's agenda for single reading, noted Mr. Whalen, and he provided background on this new bill, HB 110, enacted in the 2015-16 General Assembly. Act 50 is how it is known now. The bill has caused concern for both city and county officials. Very little was said during session and Governor Deal signed the bill, but now there is quite a bit of concern voiced by GMA. This impacts local governments but cities and counties are not allowed to enact additional ordinances except on very limited basis, i.e. zoning and special use permits and to extend hours outside of the fairly liberal hours. As of July 1, anyone over 18 can possess consumer fireworks, and the new law breaks it down into consumer fireworks (midgrade type of pyrotechnic device) versus a class where only persons legally licensed can explode fireworks (i.e. pyrotechnic companies doing large displays). The general public cannot buy these type fireworks and cannot shoot within 100 yards of a nuclear power plant or gas station. Consumer fireworks can be exploded in residential areas. The zoning aspects are that the law creates two categories of stores – one is a retail facility that is a permanent, brick-and-mortar type conforming to new fire codes adopted, which shall be inspected by State Fire Safety Commissioner and the state gets the full fee. Consumer fireworks distributor's license at \$1000 also goes to the state. Local governments get occupational taxes and building fees, etc. The State Fire Marshal is trying to ensure county fire marshals are trained for these inspections. One company has targeted several sites already for fireworks sales in the form of permanent retail facilities.

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2

The second category is that of temporary stands and that is left to local governments. State fire and safety requirements must be met but could be a tent or other temporary facility. It specifically cannot be a motor vehicle or a trailed towed by a motor vehicle. The agenda item tonight deals with permanent stores which can be established any time after July 1. Temporary stands are effective as of January 2016 and must be operated by non-profit 501(c)(3) entities. We will come back to the Board for temporary stand regulations before January. We currently have two applications for temporary stands as in the past (Walmart and another parking lot). Consumer fireworks cannot be sold from this tent but rather what has been offered in the past. If the fee is \$500 for an occupation tax, that comes to us, but it will not be included in LOST or SPLOST. Additionally, consumers can shoot fireworks until 2 am on July 4 and New Year's holidays.

Discuss a proposed amendment to the Unified Development Code, of the City of Griffin, Article 12, Signs, Section 1205 A, Prohibited Signs. *Toussaint Kirk, Director of Planning & Development will address.*

Toussaint Kirk provided an overview of the prohibited sign ordinance. This update will better define what can and cannot be done. Changes are noted in red, and Mr. Kirk answered questions

Mr. Whalen cited new case law that is being watched carefully regarding special exceptions to sign ordinances. Much discussion followed regarding the changes.

Discuss a proposed Mixed Use Overlay - Arts/Entertainment for the Griffin Downtown area. *Toussaint Kirk, Director of Planning and Development, to address.*

Toussaint Kirk provided an overview of the overlay district, the map and permitted uses. Much discussion followed on permitted and non-permitted uses.

City Manager Smith noted a few things would be added to the agenda tonight: Archway lease for space #505 in One Griffin Center, as well as possible issues on acquisition of property. Dr. Keller has much on the agenda, he noted, if we have questions for him at this time. GDOT also needs consent on Lucky Street construction, as well, and some discussion followed on the issue of right turns only at this location.

Motion/second by Commissioners Flowers/Reid Ward to adjourn at 10:28 am carried 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kenny L. Smith, City Manager/Secretary

Accepted:

Douglas S. Hollberg, Chairperson