

**CITY OF GRIFFIN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
WORKSHOP  
ONE GRIFFIN CENTER, W. ELMER GEORGE MUNICIPAL HALL  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2016**

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Chairperson Dick Morrow presided, calling the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners attending: Cynthia Reid-Ward, Doug Hollberg, Ryan McLemore, Cora Flowers (arriving at 9:09), David Brock and Rodney McCord.

Also present were City Manager Kenny L. Smith, City Attorney Andrew Whalen, III, Staff Attorney Jessica Whatley O'Connor and Teresa Watson to record minutes.

**Presentation from Quimby Melton representing Honor our KIA.**

Mr. Melton thanked the Board for its support of the Honor our KIA project, noting there are now 170 hometown heroes to honor. This project has taken off, and they have cast plaques for 76 with 20 having already been put up. Another 70 roughly will be honored this year. He understood that plaques could be put within the historic district but at first, the courthouse was not in the historic district. They have spaced them a good distance apart but now really want this to be a walking tour within the City. He is pleasantly amazed to see citizens looking at the plaques and reading them all over town. Plaque placement as planned means they are easily walkable. He is now requesting consideration of a larger boundary area to install plaques, still within the district to accommodate greater numbers of plaques. There will be additional plaques installed on City offices, as well. He was not sure what it would take but commission consideration would be appreciated. Mr. Whalen said it was the Historic Preservation Commission who could make such a decision.

Chairman Morrow noted two issues in the downtown district: 1) a judicious expansion of the district, and 2) the necessary appeal to the Historic Preservation Commission. We have seen how successful this project has been, and perhaps we can relax density requirements. He instructed Mr. Melton to talk to Toussaint Kirk for direction on approaching the Chair of the Historical Preservation Commission.

At the Tourism Spotlight recently, Mr. Melton noted they highlighted the walking tour aspect and said how attractive the KIA plaques are in the downtown area. He will certainly pursue with Mr. Kirk and go from there. Commissioners advised they had heard only good comments. Mr. Melton noted this important project was a real labor of love.

***Chairman Morrow asked to move the Raymond Head Park agenda up next for consideration.***

Commissioner Flowers arrived at 9:09 a.m.

**Discuss request for construction of a restroom at Raymond Head Jr. Park. Deputy Director of Public Works Chris Walker will address.**

Chairman Morrow detailed two types of parks: major facilities with restrooms and neighborhood or pocket parks with no restrooms. This request differentiates the pocket park mindset and changes the dynamic.

Commissioner McCord said we do have a pavilion here and it is routinely used by many for family reunions, local back-to-school events, etc. that sometimes have 200-300 users. This request, he noted, is not unreasonable. He has talked with Commissioner Hollberg and Ms. Jean Miller to possibly partner with the Heritage Apartment complex. We also need to either man the facility or have cameras to protect children in this high crime park area, and we are exploring alternatives. It was noted that even if the apartment complex is utilized, there could still exist the problem of not being manned in an effort to protect the children. Perhaps we could at least ensure that we incorporate the hours that other parks do, i.e. City Park hours are from 10 a.m. until dusk.

Chairman Morrow said he would think that groups would pick a larger park for the larger type of events with 200-300 people; these numbers would task the limits of a small pocket park.

Jean Miller, Heritage Apartments Manager since 1999, said she was a Housing Authority Member, too. When she first heard of this proposal, she was informed this was a political football more so than being a necessity. She cautioned that decisions based on race are bad. She thanked the Board, the City, First Responders, and Police Department for the success she has had at Heritage Apartments. They have 120 units HUD subsidized with 200 adult residents and around 250 children, most under 10 years. She encouraged the Board to consider this action strongly. Much as folks know to not put carpet down before painting, she did want the Board to put this restroom before much needed actions in other areas. The park is not in a position to need a restroom at this point, she continued. Gang activity, drug

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activity, all types of criminal behaviors are constantly ongoing, and the park is adjacent to the elementary school as well as the apartment complex. Vagrancy is a huge problem with people under the pavilion at the park at all hours engaging in undesirable behaviors. The foyers that lead to apartments are also areas of great concentration of vagrancy, drugs, sex, etc. At any given time these folks hang out at the park to do whatever because they have the covering and seating provided. This Park cannot be used in the same dynamic as other parks because of this type activity. She would ask if they consider the restroom, perhaps ask for a redevelopment study first to clean up and change the dynamics of use of the park. We can apply for grant monies for improvements. She appreciates Commissioner McCord's comments but in consideration of these more pressing existing problems, perhaps they should not put the cart before the horse. She agreed that sometimes they need to consider routing the larger events to City Park which is in close proximity and better equipped for large gatherings. Lighting is sorely needed, as darkness provides cover for all types of bad behavior. To put in a restroom would only encourage the 24/7 vagrancy that currently is problematic. Parking is an issue, as well, with increased traffic. While the restroom is a good idea, it is not a great idea right now and she wanted to express the need to develop a long-term plan. For now, Porta-johns can be an alternative for larger events.

Commissioner Hollberg agreed there are other problems to solve first, i.e. lighting, opening/closing hours, parking, porta-johns, police interaction, and vagrancy/drug/criminal activity.

It was noted that the pocket parks are not reserved in the same fashion as pavilions in the larger parks. Back to school events, complete with school supply provisions and free haircuts, etc. do not reserve. Again, Chairman Morrow said pocket parks are not designed for the larger type events. He too has seen groups of men under the pavilion roof at all hours of day and night, and there activities do not look like park recreation. He would like to see the City crack this nut before considering a restroom.

Commissioner Hollberg said to set hours would be a good start and give the Police Department some teeth for enforcement. City Manager Smith noted that, by their very nature, parks are made for loitering but we can improve visibility at this park for police officers.

Commissioner McCord respectfully disagreed with Chairman Morrow. He saw no problem with using the park even for larger events, but not for activities that break the law. When bags were given away and free haircuts recently, this brought 200+ residents to the park for a very positive experience. Professional athletes provided free haircuts and gave out school supplies, flooding the park with this type positive use. Consistency is important, too; if users of the park are law abiding, regardless of who they are, they can utilize the facility. He had no problem with these men using the park as long as they are not breaking the law. Mr. Smith said the City would begin some of the actions noted to improve the Raymond Head Park for the neighborhood, and Griffin Police will step up patrols in the area.

**Introduction to selected design-build team for Historic City Hall SPLOST project/renovation.  
Downtown Development Authority Executive Director Kenwin Hayes will address.**

The Evaluation Team for this project consisted of Brant Keller, Brian Miller, Bruce Ballard, Doug Krepps and Kenwin Hayes. Ten companies responded to the RFQ that was published in February 2016, and the field was narrowed through a grading and interview process. Responses to the June RFP took place earlier this month, and grading/interviews are continuing in August. The City is incorporating a design-build project delivery, rather than a traditional project delivery. With this methodology, the Owner manages only one contract with a single point of responsibility. The City will contract with a contractor for a more streamlined process, to move more quickly, and save money, as well. The project can incorporate value engineering. The designer and contractor are on the same team, providing unified recommendations and changes are addressed by the design-build entity. The City has selected Lord Aeck Sargent for the design component and Garbutt Construction as build component of the team. He introduced principles of the companies in attendance at the Workshop and detailed the hierarchy of the design-build team companies. He presented examples of projects from their firms, noting they are well versed in historical design and builds. Mr. Hayes highlighted the expected timeline, noting predesign and programming within next 45 days by October, construction to commence next summer and completion of the project in summer 2018. This project will be at the core of downtown redevelopment, adjacent to the proposed Solomon Street Park. Not to exceed \$3.1 million for this bonded project from 2015 SPLOST.

Review of concept drawing, contract specifics, project details and timeline for the construction of SPLOST-funded headquarters of Griffin Fire-Rescue. *Fire Chief Tommy Jones and Operations Officer John Hamilton will discuss.*

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Fire Chief Tommy Jones provided information and a slide presentation regarding the Griffin Fire-Rescue headquarters, a SPLOST-funded project on property at Ellis Road. They are currently relocating the existing tenants. The 5000 sf paint/body shop will be renovated for a small training facility. The RFP process revealed three bidders, as noted on the Bid Summary Tally/Evaluation, and The Howell Group and J.R. Bowman Construction Company were selected as the recommended architectural firm and building contractor respectively for this design-build team. Evaluators for the RFP were Mike Thompson, Fire Inspector; Todd Wheeler, Battalion Chief; and John Hamilton, Operations Officer. The principles have built many fire stations, and he showed the proposed renderings and layout. Conversion of this parcel for this project will be a work in progress but will utilize all of property effectively. There will be a separate administrative building which is ideal for headquarters. This came in at budget and is a really beautiful design. He offered to answer questions. Dr. Hunnicutt at UGA is also excited to have the City clean up these properties which are near the entrance to UGA Griffin Campus. The design-build teams feels the headquarters could be built for \$2.9 million, and the SPLOST allocation is \$4.35 million for the total project. New aerial apparatus for \$1.1 million is budgeted, and the property was purchased for \$450,000 (including fees, surveys, etc.). We have added estimated revenue of \$150,000 from the surplus sale of an aerial truck that will go toward this project, as well.

Chairman Morrow said he would be remiss in not welcoming new reporter, Karen Gunnels, from the Griffin Daily News. Ray Lightner has been wonderful so there are some large shoes to fill. All commissioners want to be helpful and offer support, he noted. We are all motivated to help the media get things right with no misinformation.

**Discuss consensus to designate 6.35 acres at 1515 Industrial Drive, Parcel No. 049A02009, currently owned by the City of Griffin, as the Training Center for Griffin Fire-Rescue. Fire Chief Tommy Jones will address.**

Chief Jones said the Fire Department has achieved a Class 1 rating but has no training facility. They have been borrowing the Spalding County facility and have consistently stated the need for a training facility over the years. This site was proposed 12 years ago but was moved out to the Shoal Creek Landfill. We don't anticipate complaints from neighbors as this is not in a residential area and adjoins the transfer station in this industrial setting. The Southern Crescent Technical College firefighting program will partner in the effort, and we can do the project at a fairly low cost with more details later.

**Discuss request from family of Officer Kevin Jordan to recognize the late Officer Jordan's sacrifice with a street named in his honor. City Manager Kenny Smith will address.**

Mr. Smith said he has contacted GDOT for information on an honorarium with appropriate signage, which would have to be introduced in state legislature by a local legislator and go to the Governor for approval/resolution. This honorarium does not change the actual name of any street, so we would not have the inherent problems with existing residences and businesses who must change their address. We could take a section of highway and do an honorarium, and Commissioner McCord wondered if the City could perhaps delineate a section of North 19/41, close to the Waffle House. The majority of Commissioners support the honorarium and thought North 19/41 to be ideal. Commissioner Hollberg asked if the City could get with family and detail the plan to make sure they are supportive, and Commissioners concurred.

**Consider convening Executive Session for purposes of: 1) Discussing pending/potential litigation, 2) Discussing acquisition of real estate; and 3) Deliberating/discussing evaluation of personnel.**

*Motion/second by Commissioners Hollberg/McCord to adjourn to Closed Meeting at 9:54 a.m. carried by a vote of 7-0.*

*Motion/second by Commissioners Reid-Ward/McLemore to adjourn Closed Meeting and reconvene to Open Meeting at 10:47 a.m. carried by a vote of 7-0.*

**Adjournment**

*Motion/second by Commissioners Reid-Ward/McLemore to adjourn at 10:48 a.m. carried 7-0.*

Respectfully Submitted,

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Kenny L. Smith, City Manager/Secretary

Accepted:

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Dick Morrow, Chairperson