

# Committee of the Whole Minutes - Final MAYOR AND COUNCIL



Derek Norton, Mayor  
Tim Gould, Mayor Pro Tem (Ward 6)  
Glenn Pickens (Ward 1)  
Latonia P. Hines (Ward 2)  
Travis Lindley (Ward 3)  
Charles "Corkey" Welch (Ward 4)  
Susan Wilkinson (Ward 5)  
Rickey N. Oglesby, Jr. (Ward 7)

A. Max Bacon City Hall  
Human Resources Training Room  
2800 King Street SE  
Smyrna, GA 30080

City Attorney Scott Cochran  
City Administrator Joseph Bennett  
City Clerk Heather K. Peacon-Corn

**March 13, 2025  
6:00 PM**

## 1. Roll Call

**Present:** 7 – Mayor Pro Tem / Councilmember Tim Gould, Councilmember Glenn Pickens, Councilmember Latonia P. Hines, Councilmember Travis Lindley (virtual), Councilmember Charles Welch, Councilmember Rickey N. Oglesby, Jr.

**Absent:** 1 – Mayor Derek Norton

**Also Present:** 1 – Jeffrey Tucker

**Staff:** 16 – Olivia Anderson, Joe Bennett, Dustin Davey, Louis Defense, Ken Durden, Eric Farmer, Tim George, Dat Luu, Brian Marcos, Russell Martin, Eric Mohrmann, Kyle O'Bryan, Paul Osburn, Heather Peacon-Corn, Joey Staubes, Keith Zgonc

## Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tem / Councilmember Tim Gould called to order the March 13, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting held at A. Max Bacon City Hall in the HR Training Room at 6:01 PM.

## 2. Staff M&C Agenda Items to Review

## 3. Formal Business and Presentations

- A. **COW2025-039** Presentation of the Smyrna Fire Department 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan - Brian Marcos, Fire Chief  
**Citywide**

**Smyrna Fire Department  
2025-2030 Strategic Plan**

### **Mission (Purpose), Vision & Values**

City of Smyrna Mission & Vision

Smyrna will achieve the highest levels of community attachment and commitment by providing academic excellence for our children, fully involving our citizens in all aspects of

the community, creating leadership opportunities for all residents, establishing high expectations for our quality of life and place, and creating a strong identity and image

### **Smyrna Fire Department Purpose Statement, Vision & Values**

Smyrna will achieve the highest levels of community attachment and commitment by providing academic excellence for our children, fully involving our citizens in all aspects of the community, creating leadership opportunities for all residents, establishing high expectations for our quality of life and place, and creating a strong identity and image.

**Vision Statement:** To be recognized as a leader in community risk reduction, excel at developing our people, and building enduring partnerships

**Purpose Statement:** We are an “all-hazards” organization with a focus on community risk reduction and an exceptional readiness to respond to emergencies. We save lives. We protect property. We improve the quality of life in our community.

**Core Values:** While the core values remained consistent, the committee emphasized the importance of defining each value more explicitly

- Accountability - Own it. Commitment - All in.
- Community - Everyone together. Service - Others first.
- Integrity - Do right.

### **Goals and Objectives: 2025-2030 Major Goals**

Armed with clear purpose, vision, values, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, the Smyrna Fire Department has concentrated on developing realistic strategic goals and objectives. This well-thought-out plan aims to confidently guide the department into the future.

1. Promote Firefighter Health and Wellness: Prioritizing health and wellness initiatives will enhance firefighter well-being, reducing injuries, illnesses, and stress.
2. Enhance Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Efforts: Safeguarding our community by implementing comprehensive CRR programs will assist in identifying and prioritizing local risks, then investing resources to reduce risk impact on our community.
3. Prioritize Personnel Development: Seeking new opportunities to learn and grow in the hallmark of a successful organization. Professional development will help us expand skill sets and free up time, money, and manpower to reinvest into our top priorities.
4. Ensure Adequate Staffing Levels to Optimize Response Times and Service Delivery: Maintain an effective workforce to meet service demands, minimize response times, and enhance the delivery of services to the community.
5. Ensure Financial Sustainability: Manage the fire department's budget effectively to ensure long-term financial stability and the ability to meet operational needs.
6. Enhance Emergency Preparedness: Develop and implement comprehensive emergency response plans to effectively respond to large-scale incidents and natural disasters.
7. Strengthen Employee Engagement and Community Partnerships: Foster a positive work environment and build strong relationships with community members to improve morale, teamwork, and community support for the fire department.
8. Achieve Agency Accreditation: Obtain official recognition from a recognized accrediting body for meeting specific standards of excellence in fire department operations, administration, and safety.
9. Enhance Operations Effectiveness: Improve the efficiency and efficacy of fire department operations, including response times, incident management, and overall service delivery.

10. Maintain and Fleet of Reliable, Modern Fire Apparatus to Meet the Needs of the Community: Keep fire trucks and other equipment in optimal condition and regularly replace or upgrade them to meet the evolving needs of the community.
11. Maintain and Upgrade Facilities and Equipment to Meet Current and Future Operational Needs: Ensure that fire station and other facilities are well-maintained and modernized to support current operations and accommodate future and technological advancements.

### **Environmental Scan**

Conducting an environmental scan for the Smyrna Fire Department's strategic plan involved analyzing internal and external factors that impact the department's operations and effectiveness. This scan helped identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC) that can inform strategic decisions.

- Mar-July 2023: Stakeholders were invited to provide feedback through an online survey and several in person meetings. The insights gathered from the survey, combined with data collected during in-person meetings, served as the foundation for establishing priorities and formulating recommendations for future service delivery.
- April 2024: The Smyrna Fire Department facilitated an intensive planning workshop held offsite at the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce where a diverse group of fire department personnel met to review past accomplishments, learn where the department is currently, and refocus the vision for the future.
- May 2024: In December of 2022, the department engaged Dynamix Consulting Group to develop a Community Risk Assessment Standards of Cover which was published in May 2024.
- June 2024: One-on-one sessions were scheduled with the Mayor and City Council to ensure that priorities were in alignments with the direction of our city.
- July 2024: Strategic Plan development.

### **Services Provided to the Community**

The following list outlines the current programs and services offered to the community:

**AMBULANCE SERVICE:** Services related to transporting patients to hospitals. This service is not provided by the Smyrna Fire Department. All ambulance services within Smyrna (Cobb County) are private companies contracted by the county.

**COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION EDUCATION:** Services related to educating the public to lower community risks. Services provided by the Smyrna Fire Department such as training school age children in fire safety or similar training, fire extinguisher training, smoke alarms, adult & senior safety training, CPR/First Aid, etc.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:** The mission of the Emergency Management Division is to develop plans and procedures that provide an efficient and effective response to the threats facing the City of Smyrna. By developing and exercising our all-hazards plan, we strive to minimize the impacts of an emergency or disaster on our citizens, visitors, the environment, and the city's economy. The Emergency Management Division has various Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and agreements in place to strengthen our response capabilities and continue to develop additional agreements that enhance our working relationships with local, federal, and state partners. Smyrna is one of only two cities with their own Emergency Management Agency recognized by the State of Georgia.

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES** - Services related to medical emergencies which do not include ambulance service. Incidents involving heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, trauma & injuries, breathing problems, illnesses, etc.

**FIRE INVESTIGATIONS:** Services related to investigating fire cause and origin. Incidents involving arson investigation, issuing of citations, enforcing outdoor burning regulations, etc.

**FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE (CODE ENFORCEMENT):** Services related to preventing fires and enforcing life safety codes. Building inspections, building safety systems, sprinkler requirements & inspections, local ordinances, construction plan review, etc.

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MITIGATION:** Services related to identifying, preventing, and stopping releases of hazardous materials into the community. Large fuel spills, chemical releases, etc.

**Fire Suppression** - Services related to extinguishing fires. Incidents involving building fires, vehicle fires, grass & woods fires, etc.

**TECHNICAL RESCUE:** Services related to highly technical rescue operations. Incidents involving victim extrications for motor vehicle accidents, trench rescue, high angle rescue, water rescue, below grade or confined space rescue, building collapse, etc.

### **Community Program and Service Priority**

As a part of the online survey, community members participated in ranking the nine fire department programs based on their importance. The results revealed that Emergency Medical Service held the top position, with a score 7.78. Fire Suppression closely followed at 6.49. In contrast, Code Enforcement and Community Risk Education received the lowest rankings, scoring 3.19 and 3.03, respectively.

### **2021-2024 City of Smyrna Strategic Plan**

In 2020, the City's Administration team established a strategic planning committee led by the Fire Chief and several other department heads. The planning team worked to provide clarity and establish service priorities. The plan adopted by the Mayor and City Council identified five focus areas which are supported through the annual budgeting process:

1. Quality of Life
2. Economic Development
3. Employee Excellence
4. Community Development
5. Civic Engagement

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

In June 2024, the Fire Department's executive leadership team invited each City Council member and Mayor Norton to individual meetings to better understand their priorities and explore how the fire department could support their initiatives. Below are a few themes that emerged:

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** This involves actively involving community members in decision-making processes and activities. It can include town hall meetings, community surveys, and volunteer opportunities. Engaged communities tend to be more cohesive and resilient.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** This focuses on improving the economic well-being of a community. Strategies can include supporting local businesses, attracting new industries,

and providing training programs. Economic development can lead to more job opportunities and a higher quality of life for residents.

**THINKING AHEAD:** This is about planning for the future. It involves strategic planning, forecasting future needs, and being proactive rather than reactive. This can include everything from infrastructure improvements to sustainability initiatives.

**PROVIDING A HIGH LEVEL OF SERVICE:** This means ensuring that community services (like fire & EMS) are efficient, effective, and accessible to all residents. High- quality services can greatly enhance the livability of a community.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** This is crucial for any community. It involves not only policing but also community-based safety initiatives, emergency preparedness, and creating safe public spaces.

### **Critical Issues & Service Gaps**

Utilizing the data gathered through all phases of the planning process, the following themes emerges as the primary critical issues and service gaps. The critical issues and service gaps support the development of the goals, initiatives and objectives for the organization. Limitations to the department's control over monitoring alarm handling performance.

- Service delivery coverage for a portion of the service boundary for risks in the south-central area of Smyrna.
- Measuring the impact (and cost savings) of CRR efforts within the community.
- Specific, targeted, and achievable goals based on performance and a formal and documented review annually.
- A formal quality assurance program.
- Response priorities for nonemergency service requests from healthcare facilities.
- Cost savings related to fire investigation (origin and cause determination) efforts.
- Associated cost savings related to Public Fire Education efforts.
- Regularly collect, validate, analyze, and evaluate the impact of fire detection and suppression systems within the City (more focus on fire detection devices in residential structures.)
- Monitor call concurrency which affects multiple performance factors.
- Regularly collect, analyze, and review data pertaining to property, life, injury, environmental, and other associated losses, for the last three to five years.
- Ensure the highest performance and greatest usable life for all apparatus.

### **Strategic Initiatives & Objectives**

Strategic Goal: Promote Firefighter Health and Wellness: Prioritizing health and wellness initiatives will enhance firefighter well-being, reducing injuries, and stress.

1. Objective: Implement a comprehensive health and wellness program for firefighters, including physical fitness, mental health support, and nutrition counseling.

S: Develop and introduce a health and wellness program for firefighters encompassing physical fitness, mental health support, and nutrition counseling.

M: Track participation rates, improvements in physical fitness scores, reduction in sick leave, and feedback from firefighters on mental health and nutritional benefits.

A: Collaborate with health professionals, fitness trainers, and nutritionists to create a tailored program. Ensure resources like gyms, counseling services, and nutrition plans are available and accessible.

R: Align the program with the overall mission of maintaining and enhancing the well-being and performance of firefighters, thereby improving their readiness and resilience.

T: Implement the program within 12 months, with quarterly reviews to assess progress and make necessary adjustments.

Critical Tasks:

1. Establish a structured annual exercise regimen, including regular fitness assessments and personalized training plans.
2. Establish a health and safety committee that focuses on risk management, injury prevention, and wellness initiatives.
3. Initiate a recruit program agenda incorporating resiliency training and introducing resources for mental health support.
4. Enhance our fitness facilities areas to support functional exercise.
5. Conduct annual physicals to monitor and assess the physical and mental health of our Smyrna firefighters.
6. Formalize a Smyrna Fire Department Support Program.

#### 4. Review of Current M&C Agenda

A. **COW2025-041** Review of the March 17, 2025 Mayor and Council Meeting Notice and Agenda

Mayor Pro Tem Tim Gould reviewed the March 17, 2025 Mayor and Council agenda.

**Z25-002:** Joey Staubes, Planner II, stated the subject property at 1464 Spring Street is zoned R-15 and is occupied by a single-family home and church with accessory buildings. Robert Harrison is requesting a rezoning from R-15 to MU-Conditional (Mixed Use) to maintain the existing residential and church uses, and also to allow artist studios in the accessory buildings. If approved, the only permitted use of the property will be to allow a church, single-family home, and artist studios; all other permitted uses in the MU zoning district will be prohibited. Councilmember Lindley stated that he met with residents at Williams Park. The sanctuary has a deed restriction that requires it has to remain a religious-use building.

**Z25-003:** Mr. Staubes stated the subject property at 2201 Dixie Avenue was rezoned from LI (Light Industrial) to MU (Mixed Use) in 2019 to allow Marietta Reclamation to allow residential uses on the property. The residential uses on the property have been removed and the applicant is requesting to revert back to the LI zoning district. The applicant is also proposing to construct a new storage building on the property.

**ATH2025-048:** This is the amount for the first Juneteenth celebration on June 19. Councilmember Oglesby explained that it will be an evening event because of the heat. There will be activities for kids and adults – entertainment, food, music, etc.

**ATH2025-050:** Dat Luu, IT Director, explained that the Police Department's Public Safety Systems Administrator position is currently vacant due to a retirement, transferring its responsibilities to the IT Department. This reclassification request seeks to establish a team of system administrators within IT to oversee all of the city's major software systems. This creates a dedicated team will enhance cross-training opportunities and provide additional support for police, fire, and citywide operations.



**ATH2025-051:** Greg Teague and Zach Strickland of Croy Engineering, explained that Croy Engineering will provide civil engineering services for full design, construction documents, permitting, lighting, architecture and pool design; All part of the redevelopment of the Aquatics Center at Tolleson Park. Fees are broken down by services/phases including pre-design, design phase, permitting and bid phase, construction phase and sub-consultants services.

**ATH2025-052:** Paul Osburn, Asst. Director of Public Works, explained the original contract with Lagniappe Development, for work on the budgeted project at Creatwood Park, did not include a set of trees, as they were not originally identified as being on city property. The amendment, in the amount of \$7500.00, allows for these trees to be removed, as a necessary part of moving forward with the park project.

## 5. Other Business / Staff Comment

Councilmember Oglesby: Smyrna Elite Track Club has changed their name to Smyrna Elite Spartans. Lots of talent on the team.

Councilmember Pickens: Last week he and Councilmembers Hines and Lindley traveled to Washington DC to attend a conference and meet with Georgia elected representatives. They had good meetings discussing obtaining funding for S. Cobb Drive.

Councilmember Hines: Women's History Tea will be put on hold this year. They will recognize the honorees in April at a council meeting.

Councilmember Welch: The bricks and benches at the First Baptist Church – a citizen wants to preserve those. He asked Mr. Bennett to ask about those at the next meeting with the church. He was contacted yesterday about the sponsorship for the garden tours. He mentioned a few dates that he will not be in attendance next quarter.

Councilmember Wilkinson: Has been asked about a park on the north side of Windy Hill. There are parcels along Windy Hill that belong to the city, and they would like to see a linear park there.

Councilmember Lindley: It was a productive time in Washington DC. There were good ideas shared.

Joe Bennett updated the Council on the following:

- Recycling Trucks – branding on the side of trucks
- Beginning meetings with departments on operating budget
- Has begun meetings on 2028 SPLOST

Discussion took place about how to ask for funds through the budget process.

Mayor Pro Tem Gould: Thanked Paul Osburn for meeting with and speaking to residents. He also thanked Major Defense for speaking to residents at an HOA meeting.

## 6. Executive Session (As Needed)

## 7. Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Tim Gould adjourned the March 13, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting at 7:04 PM.