

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)
Kathy Young (Ward 7)

Smyrna Community Center
Dogwood Room
1250 Powder Springs Street
Smyrna, GA 30080

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

**October 11, 2023
6:30 PM**

1. Roll Call

Present: 8 – Mayor Derek Norton, Councilmember Glenn Pickens, Councilmember Latonia P. Hines, Councilmember Travis Lindley, Councilmember Charles Welch, Councilmember Susan Wilkinson, Mayor Pro Tem / Councilmember Tim Gould, Councilmember Kathy Young

Also Present: 1 – Scott Cochran

Staff: 7 – Joe Bennett, Dan Campbell, Richard Garland, Bo Jones, Russell Martin, Heather Peacon-Corn, and Kristin Robinson

Call to Order

Mayor Derek Norton called to order the October 11, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting held at the Smyrna Community Center in the Magnolia Room at 6:30 PM.

2. Staff M&C Agenda Items to Review

3. Formal Business and Presentations

A. COW2023-052 2024 Benefits Presentation – Carol Sicard

John Knop, Oakbridge Insurance, presented the Summary of Recommendations:

- Recommended: Renew with Pareto Captive (with Integrated Cost Management Platform) + Allied TPA
- VeracityRx (ProCare) – continue all existing programs
- Guardian Ancillary Lines – Renew with Guardian
- Continue Dependent Care & Health Flexible Spending Accounts with WEX
- Teladoc telemedicine benefit – add Behavioral Health Benefit

Executive Summary:

The Pareto Captive provides the following:

- No new lasers

- Increase Rate cap of 30%

Under the Pareto Captive, you have reduced the additional liability from lasers from \$375,000 to \$50,000.

You will not have more than \$50,000 additional laser liability as long as you remain in the captive.

Executive Summary:

Year To Date, the Allied Advocate program has saved the plan \$788,782.

Carol Sicard, Human Resources Director, discussed the Kisx program:

With regard to implementing a \$250 co-payment for imaging, outside the KISx KISImaging (Keep it Simple Imaging) benefit, the copayment will apply to outpatient imaging only.

There are no changes to inpatient imaging benefit. Any time the employee is required to pay a \$250 imaging co-payment, this amount will be credited to the employee's out-of-pocket maximum for the year. Any employees utilizing the KISImaging benefit, will pay zero out-of-pocket and the City will pay a significantly reduced claim.

There is a list of 16 imaging providers within a 5-mile radius of zip code 30080. Included on the list are KISx card surgical providers as well which shows seven within a 60-mile radius. It is important to note that employees must contact KISx Card directly to schedule any services with these facilities to get discounted prices. If they were to contact a provider listed to schedule a procedure (instead of calling and scheduling through KISx) it will be run through their regular insurance without the KISx discount, and the employee would be responsible for any copays/deductibles.

Ancillary Lines Renewal Summary:

Dental: 6% Increase

-80% loss ratio over the past 12 months

Vision: 0% Increase

Basic Life/ADD Voluntary Life: 28% Increase

-Original Renewal increase of 59%

- 249% loss ratio

Short-term Disability: 14% Increase

- 67% loss ratio

- 18 paid claims

Long-term Disability: 4% Increase

- System Error reduced sold rate of \$0.40 to \$0.308. Guardian to hold rate of \$0.308.

- 1 active claim

Voluntary Benefits:

- Voluntary Critical Illness will remain flat with 0% Increase.

Mayor Pro Tem Gould asked if employees have given any feedback because of the changes that took place. Ms. Sicard explained that it was a bit of a rocky start when the changes were made, especially to the prescription portion, but overall the feedback has been really good once things got squared away.

B. COW2023-055 Croy Presentation

Zach Strickland of Croy Engineering presented the following:

Project Highlights – Windy Hill Road Improvements

- Current Status: Traffic was moved onto the new bridges in August to allow for then completion of the express lanes. The Contractor will complete the express lanes and open these up to traffic so that the local lanes that are currently being utilized can be reduced to 1 lane in each direction to allow for the construction of the trails and parking and completion of the walls.
- Contractor: Baldwin Paving Co., Inc Construction began 05/04/2020.
- Contract Amount: \$30,050,260.13
- Baldwin indicates that they will be substantially complete by December 2024.

Project Highlights – Windy Hill Multi-Use Trail

- Scope: Exploring the feasibility and design options for the future construction of a multi-use trail on Windy Hill from Atlanta Road to Village Parkway.
- Anticipated Study Completion Date: Summer 2024

Project Highlights – Downtown Improvements

The Site & Roadway Project:

- Scope includes the realignment of King Street and Infrastructure Improvements
- Project is currently in the punch list phase and Public Works is working with the contractor to resolve the outstanding items

Scheduled Completion: Fall 2023

Contractor: Ohmshiv Construction

Project Highlights – South Cobb Drive Improvements

- Scope: Improving pedestrian safety from Concord Road to Windy Hill Road by constructing landscaped medians for refuge and beautification. Reducing traffic congestion by providing bus pull-offs and bike lanes.
- Status: Funding in TIP. Survey design database is being finalized. Concept Development and Environmental Assessments have begun with Cobb DOT. Cobb DOT is administering the project until Smyrna gains LAP certification. The design team is currently collecting traffic counts and drafting Concept Report documents. Property Owner notification letters should go out this month to inform residents of these activities.

Project Highlights – Downtown Parking Deck

- Scope: Construction of a parking deck facility to serve the City's downtown and surrounding area.
- Status: Concept layout and location was approved by Mayor and Council. The RFQ Submissions were received and evaluated in August. Top two firms were interviewed on 09/07/23. Currently working with top ranked firm to develop an anticipated project schedule.

Project Highlights – Restrooms at North Cooper Lake Park

- Scope: Construction of restrooms facilities to serve the City's North Cooper Lake Park and Community Garden.
- Status: The Restroom facility has been placed and Public Works is coordinating with Ga Power to get the building energized. In addition to the Denali Double Flush, the City will be constructing a timber frame pavilion.
- Pavilion construction anticipated to begin in November 2023 and be complete Early 2024.

Prefabricator: CXT Inc. an L.B. Foster Company

Prefabricated Restroom Costs: \$98,000

Pavilion Contractor: S.H.Creel Contracting
Timber Frame Pavilion Costs: \$260,000

Project Highlights – Resurfacing

- FY 2023 Resurfacing Contract is \$1,434,145
- Contractor (FY23): Magnum Paving, LLC
- The City is exploring additional funding sources to increase the resurfacing efforts.

Roads Completed in FY 2023 Include:

- Vineyard Way
- Bordeaux Walk
- Lake Drive
- Terry Meyer Drive
- Emory Road
- Wooddale Drive
- Cliff Crest Drive
- Mill Pond Road
- Afton Way
- Woodruff Drive
- Cumberland Valley Drive
- Shenandoah Valley Lane
- Napa Valley Court
- Laurel Springs Way

Roads to be Completed in FY 2024 Include:

- Bourne Drive
- Pasadena Place
- Ask Kay Drive
- Berkley Drive
- Fleming Street
- Dogwood Circle
- Oakley Trace
- Highview Drive
- Spring Leaf Circle
- Evergreen trail
- Argo Drive
- Spring Drive
- Barbara Lane
- United Drive

Project Highlights – Aquatics Center

- Conceptual site layout, water feature amenities, Aquatics programming, and facility master planning are underway.
- Public input sessions were held 09/26/2023, 10/01/2023, & 10/03/2023 to share the preliminary concepts and receive public feedback. Comments are being compiled.

Project Highlights – Splashpad/Sprayground

- Scope: Construction of a Splashpad at River Line Park to expand the offerings of the facility.
- Status: Award of the Splashpad at River Line Park was awarded to Winter Construction on 09/18/2023. Winter and the design team are finalizing design elements for Construction to begin.
- Anticipated completion: Summer 2024

Non-SPLOST Project Highlights – Turf Field Conversions

- Scope: Conversion of identified fields at River Line Park and Jonquil Park to artificial turf.
- Status: Project to be advertised for bid next week.
- Recommendation for award to be on the agenda for the November 20th Mayor and Council meeting.

4. Review of Current M&C Agenda

A. COW2023-053 Review of the October 18, 2023 Mayor and Council Agenda

Mayor Derek Norton reviewed the Mayor and Council agenda with the Council.

- Russell Martin, Community Development Director, presented the following for item Z23-007:

Atlantic Development Partners LLC is requesting a rezoning from LI (Light Industrial) to OD (Office-Distribution) for the ability to construct a climate controlled self-storage facility. The subject property is zoned LI and has been used for an industrial purpose as a business to move machinery. The existing building will be demolished for the construction of a new climate controlled self-storage building. The proposed building will be 113,596 sq. ft. The building will be three stories with a basement with a maximum height of 40 feet. The elevation visible from Atlanta Road will be three stories and the building will follow the contour of the property to have a basement level at the rear of the property adjacent to CSX rail right-of-way. The project consists of a 20 ft. landscape buffer along the sides of the property adjacent to residential.

The proposed building will utilize stone, EIFS, and metal paneling for the front façade. The applicant has provided architectural renders with the zoning application for reference.

The applicant is providing 11 parking spaces which meets the minimum parking requirement.

Community Development has reviewed the zoning proposal against the city's 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Plan. The zoning proposal to Office-Distribution is consistent with the Industrial Mixed Use land use designation on the Future Land Use Map.

The rezoning will require the following variance:

- 1) Allow side setback variance from 50' to 20' (Staff Supports)

The subject property is allowed to have a 0' rear setback because the rear property line abuts railroad right-of-way.

Community Development has reviewed the proposed development against the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance with respect to the use as a self-storage facility. The proposed development meets the zoning requirements for a self-storage facility.

Community Development staff is supportive of the change in zoning from LI to OD-Conditional as it will be a downzoning from an industrial use. The rezoning to OD will be more compatible with the surrounding residential uses than the uses allowed in LI.

- Bo Jones, Utility Services Director, discussed the ordinance Ordinance (ORD2023-012) for local amendments to the plumbing code for water efficiency submission of proposed amendment to DCA (City of Smyrna ordinances Chapter 102 – Section 17 Water Efficiency). This is required by the state.

- Richard Garland, Parks & Recreation Director, discussed the Christmas Decoration Lease Program. The original ask was around \$200K, but since then, some adjustments have been made to decrease the amount to \$178,736.00. The project will consist of: lighting all the trees, architectural lighting, lighted globes within the trees, lighted tunnel into the new Village Green, etc. It is a combination of nighttime and daytime decorations. City staff used to do all of the decorations, and it used to take 6+ weeks to put up and 6+ weeks to take down. This time the company will handle all of it other than the big tree lighting. All of the decorations will be their decorations. Illuminating Designs is the only company that came back with a one-year lease option to allow the City to see how it goes and make a decision afterward moving forward. This will free up resources to focus on Parks & Recreation jobs that usually has to be stalled during all of the weeks that are devoted to decorating. Discussion took place about the lighted trees and the use of colored lights versus white lights. Mayor Norton asked that Mr. Garland send an email with example pictures. Brief discussion took place regarding potential problematic religious decorations. Mayor Norton asked that Mr. Garland research what other cities do.

5. Other Business / Staff Comment

Joe Bennett, City Administrator, provided the following updates to Mayor and Council:

- Online surveys for aquatic center and tennis/pickleball: 965 responses for aquatic center, 542 responses for tennis/pickleball
- October 18, 2023, the stones for the unidentified individuals at Mt. Zion Cemetery will be installed. Staff is working with the National Historic Registry to add Mt. Zion Cemetery to it.
- City Hall will be closed on October 20 because there will be no water. Plumbers will be installing new instant heaters to the sinks at City Hall. Overflow detectors will also be installed for future issues with water.

Kristin Robinson, Assistant City Administrator, stated that tax bills were sent out. Lots of phone calls have come in with lots of questions, but things are going fine. The Munis system is being updated which will allow citizens to be able to pay their tax bills much easier.

Councilmember Welch mentioned that he will not be supporting the turf fields project until issues can be resolved with the current vendor. He also expressed concern that the fields will be fenced and locked except when in use by the organization. He stated he feels that citizens should be able to use the fields when not in use during game times and practice. Mayor Norton stated that there are several meetings before those issues are decided, so those concerns can be addressed in those meetings.

Councilmember Hines thanked staff for their efforts at the 151st Birthday Celebration, especially public safety. She also mentioned that Rose Garden is hosting their Fall Festival hosted and funded by the residents. Ms. Hines acknowledged the horrific events that took place over the weekend in Israel.

Councilmember Wilkinson also thanked staff for their hard work during the 151st Birthday Celebration. She asked about the number of Smyrna residents from each household who participate on the Smyrna fields. Those numbers will come from Mr. Garland.

Mayor Pro Tem Gould mentioned the Ques & Brews event at Brawner Hall this Saturday. He also thanked Heather Peacon-Corn (City Clerk) for helping with the CMA event the night before.

Councilmember Young echoed her thanks to staff for the 151st Birthday Celebration. She also echoed Councilmember Hines' comments about the events that took place in Israel. She stated she would like to see more religions represented for invocations during Council meetings. Ms. Young and Ms. Hines commended Mayor Norton for his efforts in putting together the interfaith meetings. She also mentioned that Saturday there will be a ward 7 meet & greet. She mentioned that the public input process for the aquatic center has been excellent. She also said Police and Fire Departments sent representatives to Campbell High School for career opportunity presentations.

6. Executive Session (As Needed)

7. Adjournment

Mayor Derek Norton adjourned the October 11, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting at 7:47 PM.

Facilities are provided throughout City Hall for convenience of persons with disabilities.

THIS MEETING WAS PROPERLY NOTICED AND POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NOTICING STANDARDS AS OUTLINED IN O.C.G.A. 50-14-3:
The City of Smyrna website – www.smyrnaga.gov
City Hall, 2800 King Street SE, Notice Boards