



**WORK SESSION NOTES
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
CITY OF DULUTH, GA
JANUARY 24, 2022**

PRESENT: Mayor Harris, Council members Harkness, Thomas, Doss, Graeder and Whitlock, City Manager, Department Directors, City Attorney

Mayor Harris called the January 24th regular work session to order at 5:30pm.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS/UPDATES

1. URA & EBAC APPOINTMENTS

City Manager James Riker explained that the City of Duluth Urban Redevelopment Agency (URA) has been operating with two members since the passing of Councilmember Kelkenberg. Additionally, the Employee Benefits and Audit Committee (EBAC) calls for two members of the elected body. In March of 2021 Council members Thomas and Jones were appointed. Staff requested direction on filling the term held by former council member Billy Jones.

Staff was directed to prepare ordinances of appointment for Councilmember Marline Thomas to fill the vacated position on the URA, and Councilmember Jamin Harkness to the EBAC to fill the Council vacancy. These will be placed on the February agenda.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

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City Engineer Margie Pozin discussed the evolution of Capital Improvement Project (CIP) ideas and outlined the purpose of them, various stages and requirements they may go through depending on type of project and discussed funding sources.

Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Ken Sakmar further detailed SPLOST funding and explained the accounting process behind the City receiving this monthly amount. City Manager James Riker noted that the timeframe for some of the lengthier projects or changes in scope could be reasons why portions of the older SPLOST funding have yet to be spent. Mr. Sakmar broke down the eligible categories and gave the current balances of each issue.

Ms. Pozin then gave an update on current capital projects, including status of scopes, schedules, and budgets. She gave brief histories and status of Pine Needle Drive (cul-de-sac/sidewalk), the Main St. Enhanced Sidewalk project (connecting Brock Rd. to Greysolon project/West Gwinnett Bikeway), Rogers Bridge replacement and Trailhead. She also covered the Multi-Corridor Landscaping, Davenport Road extension and related Quiet Zone for the downtown railroad crossings. She concluded the city CIPs by summarizing the Living Honorarium move, and the sewer projects associated with the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding (for Pinecrest and Hill Community). For the benefit of new council members, she also reported on the status of two Gwinnett County projects (Western Gwinnett Bikeway, Pleasant Hill widening) and Georgia Dept. of Transportation projects (SR120 widening).

3. DULUTH PUBLIC ART COMMISSION (DPAC) PRESENTATION/PAAF FUNDING

Councilmember Whitlock and DPAC Chair Sanjay Parekh outlined the purpose and mission of the Duluth Art Master Plan, the roles, responsibilities of the Council and DPAC. They explained the importance of encouraging awareness of and participation in the arts among the citizens, businesses and institutions concerned with the arts in Duluth.

Mr. Whitlock explained that funding for DPAC has been accomplished by private donations until now. A process exists where developers of commercial and residential projects exceeding \$100,000 in value are referred to DPAC for the purpose of educating the applicant on opportunities for contribution to the arts as articulated in the city public art master plan as well as educate them on the impact art has on the community and the economy. Developers and builders are encouraged by designated members of DPAC to voluntarily contribute an art project or amount of money equal to the value to one (1) percent of the new, non-city initiated, construction or renovation projects, excluding projects that have their own master art plan. Since inception in 2013, DPAC has received a total of \$264,427.57. Mr. Whitlock pointed out some of the temporary project, permanent art projects as well as highlighted several pending art projects.

A discussion was held on the possibility of adding funding to the City's Capital Projects as well as additional funding in the General Fund.

Following discussion, a consensus was reached to direct staff to implement funding for art in each capital project into the FY23 budget as well as add a line item for funding in the General fund budget for consideration during the FY23 budget discussions.

III. MATTERS FROM COUNCIL

Councilmember Graeder reported his recent involvement with a Korean community group called 316 United Nations of Gwinnett and discussed their monthly meetings. The next one will be held in Duluth on Feb 15th at 5pm. He was also concerned with the number of temporary signs along the roadways. Planning Director Aiken responded that enforcement with fine options was extremely problematic since staff collects thousands of signs per year, but by picking them up as soon as possible the advertisers are quickly discouraged from wasting their advertising funds along Duluth roads.

Councilmember Thomas questioned tracking rental properties. Mr. Riker and Mr. Aiken responded that state law prohibits registry, but that staff is in contact with GMA to monitor any changes and continue to monitor what cities are permitted to do.


Mayor Harris announced the next "Connect Duluth" show via Facebook on Wednesday January 26 at 7:00pm.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Mayor and Council is February 14, 2022 at 5:30pm in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Approved this 14 day of February, 2022.



Mayor Nancy Harris

ATTEST:



Asst. City Manager/City Clerk, Teresa Lynn