



Mayor and City Council Work Session

Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at 6:30 PM

City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

Mayor and Council: Dr. Beverly Jones – Mayor | Post 3 :Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith

Post 1: Council Member Anita Bass | Post 2: Council Member Mark Marianos

Post 4: Council Member Gil Freeman | Post 5: Council Member Shawnette Bryant

Post 6: Council Member Teresa Crowe

**Staff: Darnetta Tyus - City Manager | Shawn Edmondson - Assistant City Manager - City Clerk |
Danny Mai - Assistant City Clerk | Jeff Strickland - City Attorney**

City of Stone Mountain, GA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofStoneMtn/>

Link to join Webinar: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85727715572>

Call to Order

Determination of Quorum

PRESENT

Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass

Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos

Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith

Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman

Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Mayor Beverly Jones

Invocation and Pledge

The Mayor Led the Pledge at [06:33] PM ET [18:33]. The Mayor Led the Invocation at [06:35] PM ET [18:35].

Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders (3 minutes per comment)

Comments from the Public

The public comments are reserved exclusively for comments from the public and not for immediate reply. The purpose of public comment is to allow the public to voice city related requests, concerns or opinions only during the public comment portion of the City Council meeting. I. The Mayor and City Council reserves the right to extend or limit the length of public comments based on: (1) the issue under discussion; (2) the number of items on the agenda; and (3) the extent to which the speaker remains constructive in their comments and questions. II. The public may not directly confront the public speaker but must direct all comments and questions to the Mayor and City Council. III. Public harassment of or confrontation with a public speaker will not be tolerated. Members of the public violating tenets two or three will be asked to sit down or leave the premises.

Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders (3 minutes per comment)

Comments from the Public

Citizen Comment #1 (Natasha Hendricks): Hendricks noted that she is the Principal of Stone Mountain Elementary School. Hendricks highlighted the benefits that the students at the school will receive from this partnership, and thanked City Manager Tyus.

Citizen Comment #2 (Cheryl Dudley): Dudley noted that the city is moving towards the right direction with the adoption of the Elementary School. Dudley expressed the importance of city constituents have the right to be heard. Dudley noted the state laws regarding political signs. Dudley noted that political signs cannot be removed IF it is on personal property. Dudley mentioned that item #17 and expressed her opinion on the subject matter.

Citizen Comment #3 (Grace Kelly): Kelly expressed her excitement with the adoption of the Elementary School. Kelly also noted that the recent Clean Up event was a success.

Citizen Comment #4 (Phyllis Broughton): Broughton expressed the importance that the city needs to work towards road improvements.

Citizen Comment #5 (Michael Nunley): Nunley noted the success of the City-Wide Cleanup. Nunley noted their desire to have additional usage of the green space for additional events.

Citizen Comment #6 (Susan Taylo): Taylo noted their desire to keep the green space green. mentioned the importance of having events there.

Citizen Comment #7 (Clint Monroe): Monroe discussed the contract proposal with POND and suggested that there needs to be a representative sample of the citizens for the POND study, and the naming of the Baptist Lawn.

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reserves the right to extend or limit the length of public comments based on: (1) the issue under discussion; (2) the number of items on the agenda; and (3) the extent to which the speaker remains constructive in their comments and questions. II. The public may not directly confront the public speaker but must direct all comments and questions to the Mayor and City Council. III. Public harassment of or confrontation with a public speaker will not be tolerated. Members of the public violating tenets two or three will be asked to sit down or leave the premises.

Review of the Journal (Assistant City Manager & City Clerk Edmondson)

1. Request Minutes from City Council Meeting [05.07.2024] be approved.

Request Minutes from City Council Meeting [05.07.2024] be approved.

CM Bryant noted that City Council Meetings should not have timers for when Council Members are entering.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

2. Request Minutes from City Council Special Meeting [05.16.2024] be approved.

Request Minutes from City Council Special Meeting [05.16.2024] be approved.

No Discussion Made.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

Reading of Communications

Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

City Manager Tyus noted that she would like to make an amendment on item #13 to include the words "request and approve". City Manager Tyus noted that the Historical Society is applying for a grant, and by not voting on the item, they will be missing the deadline for the grant. City Manager Tyus noted that the line item for these funds are already budgeted for this fiscal year.

MOTION TO ADJUST.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman

CM Crowe noted that she would like to add item New Discussion item #20 to the agenda, "Discussion on adding streetlights to main street". Thus moving Executive Session to item #21.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 6 Crowe.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

CM Freeman would like add Discussion item #21: Discussion on questions and concerns about the DDA.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Bryant.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE DAY WITH THE FOLLOWING ABOVE CHANGES.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Committee Discussion Items

3. Planning Commission

Grace Kelly represented the Planning Commission. Kelly noted that the Planning Committee had discussions on adding definitions within the city ordinances in order to provide clarity on retail stores. Kelly also noted that the Planning Committee discussed potentially limiting short-term rentals, similar to AirBNB.

Mayor Jones requested the locations and names of convince stores and Smoke Shops.

4. Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority

Carl Wright represented the DDA. Wright noted that the DDA is working on a contract with a landscaper. Wright also noted that there have been 4 interviews with prospective DDA committee member(s). Wright also noted that there are some additional applications for the DDA.

Wright noted that the landscapers will be working on the middle island in downtown and will be maintaining the landscaping from city hall to the city cemetery. Noting that the landscapers will not be working through the cemetery.

CM Bryant asked for clarification on Wright's title. Wright noted that he is the Chairman of the DDA. CM Bryant asked if the DDA Members are up to date on the DDA Training. Wright noted that, most of the DDA are trained or are in the process of being trained.

CM Freeman asked if there was a timeline where training is required. Assistant City Manager & City Clerk noted that training needs to be completed within 12 months after being assigned a role within DDA.

Wright noted that the city has many vacant buildings, and that the city needs to declare them as nuances. Wright mentioned that every DDA member is passionate about the DDA and the city itself.

5. Historic Preservation Commission

Elaine Vaughn represented the HPC. She mentioned that the HPC had 2 certifications of appropriateness. She additionally mentioned and elaborated on the COA's. She noted that both of these COA's were approved. She noted that there are two seats open with the HPC. Mary Beth Reed is hosting an event on May 29th at 06:00PM discussing the architectural history of the HPC in Council Chambers. The next HPC meeting was moved due to Juneteenth.

6. Parks and Recreation Committee

The Parks & Recs committed noted that on June 3rd, there will be a survey sent throughout the community, surveying information on additional benefits that the city can provide to the community. The representative also noted that they are continuing work on the Book Bench Project and are requesting additional information regarding updates to the Park bathrooms.

Committee Discussion Items

7. Public Safety- Police Chief- James Westerfield Jr

Police Chief James Westerfield discussed the statistics regarding the Police Department and Police Department Administration.

(Statistics are attached in the Agenda Packet and are also on the City Website).

Police Chief James Westerfield also re-introduced Sgt Stone to the community. Police Chief James Westerfield also discussed internal Police Administrative items: (1) Amy Hall is a Lead Detector for the City Administration (2) David Stone has re-entered the Stone Mountain PD as a Sergeant (3) Julio Aponte is now a Lieutenant.

8. **Administration- Assistant City Manager-City Clerk- Shawn Edmondson**

Administration Assistant City Manager & City Clerk Shawn Edmondson introduced the items from the City Clerk's Office to City Council.

(Statistics are included within the Agenda Packet and can be found on the City Website)

City Manager's Report

9. **City Manager - Darnetta Tyus**

City Manager Darnetta Tyus:

-City Manager Tyus noted that the Revenue and Expenses package is within the Agenda Package. City Manager Tyus noted that this is the March Report. City Manager Tyus specifically noted certain pages to the Council, and wanted to bring those pages to the Council's attention.

-City Manager Tyus wanted to commend all participants of the City-Wide Clean up. City Manager Tyus noted that there were 200+ volunteers for the City-Wide Clean Up and brought to the community's attention that every team played a major role.

-City Manager Tyus thanked the business community and Atlanta Gas Light for supporting the city with this initiative.

-City Manager Tyus discussed the LCI contract, having noted that the city received a grant and will be using that grant on a study for a walking trail between all city parks.

-City Manager Tyus showcased images of the old Police Headquarters, in order to completely demo the dilapidated portion of the depo.

-City Manager Tyus provided an update to the Rockbrough signage, and informed council about the city's timeline relating to the signage update project.

-City Manager Tyus provided an update on the outdoor gym and wanted to bring attention to the fact that there have been a lot of activity relating to the site.

-City Manager Tyus provided an update on the park bathrooms and noted that there is a call scheduled to discuss the work on the parks.

-City Manager Tyus noted that the city has applied for a grant to work on the Caboose. City Manager Tyus noted that the Caboose would not qualify as a historic item but can be classified as a different item.

-City Manager Tyus provided an update on the 8-entry way signage and noted that the vendors are not being responsive.

-City Manager Tyus noted that the digital signage would not be within code compliance, and that she is working with Code Compliance and the Chief of Police in order to find a way to allow it.

-CM Crowe requests that City Manager Tyus include updates to the signage on every City Manager report moving forward. City Manager Tyus agreed to do so.

Council Policy Discussion Topics

New Business

City Mayor Jones moved item #12 in front of the other items.

10. Discussion on the approval of a revised Change Order Proposal from A&S, reducing the previously proposed amount from \$64,999.94 to \$47,999.96. (City Manager Tyus)

The Representative from A&S Paving spoke to City Council and noted that the firm recommended additional Geo Technical fabric in order to redo a portion of the street. The Representative also noted that the change order is reducing the amount of money spent on the project. The Representative noted that this project will take a few days once the change order has been approved, specifically a week: contingent on the weather. CM Marianos asked if The Representative anticipates any additional delays for this project. The Representative noted that the firm is anticipating additional issues; due to the fact that, the previous planner did a poor job with the initial creation of the streets.

City Manager Tyus is seeking approval for the change order.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CHANGE ORDER.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

11. Discussion on the approval of the estimates received for the interior demolition project, with Kissberg Construction submitting the lowest bid at \$29,950.00 (City Manager Tyus)

City Manager Tyus requests the approval of the item. CM Crowe voiced her concerns regarding the gutting of the building due to rodent activity. Crowe also noted that it is important to include the involvement of an exterminator. City Manager Tyus noted that this is beyond a rodent issue and would additionally require the internal demolition of the Depot.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe, Mayor Jones

Mayor Jones noted that she would like City Staff to look into securing the other section of the Depot. City Mayor Jones requested that Exterminators need to look into the other building. CM Marianos asked for a timeline, with City Mayor requesting that this item is re-explored for by next session. CM Bass is requesting that there be an air quality test to ensure staff safety. CM Freeman is asking for confirmation that the rodents in one section of the Depo does not run to the second section of the Depo.

VOTE FAILED. TABLED TO NEXT SESSION.

12. Discussion on the Approval of the Livable Center Initiative (LCI) Project Selection (City Manager Tyus)

Discussion on the Approval of the Livable Center Initiative (LCI) Project Selection (City Manager Tyus)

Major Jones moved this item in front of the other items.

City Manager Tyus noted that there are several representatives here to present to Council. Moving forward, they will be called "The Representatives" when relating to this item.

The Representatives noted that the project is to set up the city into a better future, connecting the parks all via a trail. The Representatives introduced themselves to the council. The Representatives noted that there are two engagement firms working on this project in conjunction with POND. The Representatives mentioned the importance of community involvement. They also noted that this will take 8-12 months of work in order to complete the project. The Representatives noted that engagement is important

and are happy to partner with the city. The Representatives noted that they will work to get the parks all connected with the downtown.

CM Marianos asked The Representatives about how they will counteract Gentrification within the community. The Representatives noted that they believe in working within the community and will engage the community with different types of exercises in order to help prevent Gentrification.

The Representatives also noted that they will provide equity to the stakeholders within the community. They note that it is important to break down barriers that will impact the success of the project. The Representatives noted that they are working towards a similar project with the city of Savannah and have worked towards preventing gentrification.

CM Freeman noted various issues that the community had in regard to POND. CM Freeman discussed and brought forward that the community would like to see a statistical sampling of the community in order to better get community feedback that more accurately represents the population of the city.

The Representatives noted that the prior engagement was very situational; due to the fact that it was done during COVID (March 2022). The Representatives noted and highlighted the fact that the prior engagement was challenging due to a variety of factors relating to COVID. They noted that POND collected data on the website, and physically in person. The Representatives noted the importance of community engagement during table talks and brought to attention that the city has many renters (52% per CM Freeman).

The Representatives noted various municipalities that they have worked with. Council and The Representatives spoke on equity issues, and challenges that the city may face.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM AS IT IS.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

13. Discussion on the Allocation of Funds (\$7,500.00) to Historical Society. (CM Marianos)

VOTE TO AMEND THE AGENDA WAS PASSED. NEW WORDING, "Request and approve the Allocation of Funds (\$7,500.00) to Historical Society. (CM Marianos)".

Mayor Jones thanked the firm for the hard work that they have done. Mary Beth Reed thanked the city as well.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

14. Discussion on a potential Installation of a Mirror on Ridge Ave in Front of Stone Bush Subdivision (CM Bryant)

CM Bryant is requesting the installation of the mirror to increase citizen safety. CM Marianos is in agreement that this is a safety issue.

ITEM WAS TABLED TO NEXT SESSION.

15. Discussion about Parking Deck Progress for the Blue House Foundation (CM Bryant)

CM Bryant asked City Manager Tyus for an update on this item. City Manager Tyus noted that the city will be able to provide an update regarding this item.

ITEM WAS TABLED.

16. Discussion on Potential Preparations for the 2026 World Cup Event; such as, short term rentals, long term rentals, parking, promotions, etc. (CM Freeman)

ITEM WAS TABLED UNTIL THE NEXT WORK SESSION.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

17. Discussion on amending Council Meeting Procedures to include the removal of cellphones within council Chambers during City Council Sessions (MPT Smith)

MPT Smith noted that this council procedure would affect only city council members, not the other participants. MPT Smith noted that this is to ensure that the city council will be able to properly respect the speaker.

CM Bryant noted that it is important for citizens to text the council members live in order to discuss important issues that citizens would normally not have access to. CM Marianos called to question on how this would be enforceable.

NO ACTIONABLE ITEMS, TABLED.

18. Discussion on a Traffic Calming for Mountain View Drive. (CM Bass)

City Manager Tyus noted that she will provide CM Bass with a package that details the process for Traffic Calming.

NO OTHER DISCUSSION OCCURED.

19. Discussion on The City of Stone Mountain's 2021 Comprehensive Plan; specifically focusing on, (1) What has been accomplished since its adoption AND (2) What are the top 3 items that still need to be completed. (CM Bass)

Discussion on The City of Stone Mountain's 2021 Comprehensive Plan; specifically focusing on, (1) What has been accomplished since its adoption AND (2) What are the top 3 items that still need to be completed. (CM Bass)

CM Bass introduced the item to the council and stated that she wanted to activate the City Comprehensive Plan.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Discussion on adding streetlights to main street (CM Crowe)

MPT Smith, noted that some business owners reached out to suggest the idea of high-quality LED lights among downtown. CM Crowe noted that other communities have nights at light; which results in, differentiation between other cities. CM Bryant asked if the light pole will be put up, Assistant City Manager & City Clerk Edmondson noted that the city is currently looking for alternatives to light the city up.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

New Ordinances and Resolutions

Remarks of Privilege

Announcements by The Mayor

Executive Session to Discuss Personnel, Legal, and/or Real Estate (if needed)

Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Bryant.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe