



**CITY OF LITHONIA**  
**MINUTES—CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**Monday, July 20, 2020 @ 5:30 PM**

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**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The City Council Work Session Virtual Meeting was called to order at 5:36 pm by Mayor Shameka S. Reynolds. A roll call was taken and the following City Council Members were present: Diane Howard, Darold Honore, Amelia Inman, and Ric Dodd. Councilwoman Wynn joined the call later. City Attorney Valorri Jones and Zoning Administrator Bill Johnston later joined the call as well.

**II. Prayer by Pastor Paul E. Brewer Sr., Abundant Faith Christian Church**

Prayer was led by Pastor Paul E. Brewer.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Councilman Dodd motioned to approve the July 20, 2020 Agenda with changes; the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 4-0.

Councilman Honore indicated that letter b. under Approval of Council Meeting Minutes should read City Council Meeting and not a Work Session. Add discussion for Code Enforcement under Other Business, letter e.

**IV. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes**

**a. July 6, 2020 – Public Hearing on FY20 Millage Rate Virtual Meeting @ 11:30 AM**

Councilwoman Inman motioned to approve the Public Hearing on FY20 Millage Rate Virtual Meeting Minutes for July 6, 2020; the motion was seconded by Councilman Dodd, and approved by a vote of 4-0. Councilwoman Howard abstained.

**b. July 6, 2020 – City Council Virtual Meeting @ 5:30 PM**

Councilman Honore motioned to approve the City Council Virtual Meeting Minutes for July 6, 2020; the motion was seconded by Councilman Dodd, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**V. Public Comments Response for July 6, 2020 City Council Virtual Meeting**

Mayor Reynolds stated that she and Councilwoman Inman personally met with Ms. Amy Garner during the week of July 6<sup>th</sup>, working in conjunction with the Interim Chief of Police Tamesha Minafee to provide resolution. Additionally, Captain Minafee spoke with the residents on Reagin Street on the situations that occurred during the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend.

**VI. Presentation (Limit 8 minutes per person)**

**a. Ms. Dawn Massey; Historical Properties The Women's Club, and The Camellia House**

Ms. Dawn Massey thanked Council again for listening to her, stating one of the properties that she owns is a cultural asset and the other a historic landmark to the city. According to the national historic registry as a driver for community development the historic landmarks are; 2 clubhouses, 3 cemeteries, 2 parks, the ruins of the Bruce Street School, the former Georgia railroad quarry, 4 churches, and 3 schools. These places are assets to a community, can be advertised and promoted. Ms. Massey is humbly asking Council to amend

the ordinance and exempt historical landmarks and cultural assets. The Women's Club and The Camellia House are unique properties in the city and do not have viable options to sustain themselves beyond event facilities and is the most appropriate use of these resources.

Councilman Honore motioned to amend the event ordinance to exempt historic landmarks and cultural assets for discussion. The motion did not receive a second and Councilman Honore rescinded the motion to allow for further consultation with Bill Johnston Zoning Administrator. Mayor Reynolds moved to place the item on the City Council Meeting Agenda for August 3, 2020.

**b. Ms. Ellen Alexander and Mr. Kazemde Ajamu; 55th Anniversary Voting Rights Act in commemoration of John R. Lewis and C.T. Vivian**

Mr. Kazemde Ajamu of Blackdot Cultural Center in conjunction with The Union of Minority Neighborhoods out of Boston (hosting like events with various cities throughout the country) is proposing to host an event on August 6th in celebration of the voting rights act. The event will promote voter registration in addition to recognizing the legacy of the voting rights act and to recognize the untimely transition of John Lewis and C.T. Vivian who were tirelessly involved to make the voting rights act happen. Additionally, State Representatives have been contacted to speak. Mr. Ajamu is proposing to close Main Street between Swift and the Street adjacent the corner of the old post office between the hours of 6:30-8:00 pm., and would like to partner with the city to provide the stage and public safety security without fees involved, Blackdot would provide refreshments. Councilwoman Howard is in favor of the voter registration but not in favor of any large gatherings with the continuance of COVID concerns. Ms. Alexander and Mr. Ajamu stated that in their planning discussions the wearing of masks is encouraged and will have a setup with markers on the street that allows for social distancing practices, hand sanitizers and gloves will be on hand. Mayor Reynolds thanked Ms. Alexander and Mr. Ajamu and stated that she would get back with them, and requested a program outline to consider further. A program outline was subsequently provided to council shortly thereafter via email.

**VII. Action Items**

**a. Revenue Enhancement Opportunities/Audit**

Mayor and Council have agreed to table and will get back with Mr. Marshall Mitchell.

**b. Resolution No. 20-07-20 Supporting the Use of Face Coverings During the COVID-19 Outbreak (first reading)**

Councilman Honore motioned to approve Resolution No. 20-07-20: Supporting the Use of Face Coverings during the COVID-19 Outbreak; the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

Councilwoman Howard is requesting a change to reflect reasonable exceptions to the use of face coverings state that *children at age three (3) and under*, and the language to reflect that *it is encouraged*.

**c. FY2020-21 MS4 Annual Report and DWS Proposal**

Councilman Dodd motioned to generate a RFP process for storm water management to replace CERM; the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

Mayor Reynolds proposed to start generating RFP's for a new storm water company, and requested that City Clerk Robinette Blount search for record of the company that was used prior to CERM and any previous bids that were proposed.

## **VIII. Other Business**

### **a. Event to select a Sunday date; Mr. Doug Thompkins; Black Lives Matter street painting**

Documentation detailing a structured format of the event was not provided by Mr. Doug Thompkins, nor did he make himself available on the call, therefore, a Sunday date to begin the project cannot be decided on at this time. Mayor Reynolds indicated that we'll wait to see what he comes up with.

### **b. Alcohol Ordinance**

Mayor and Council agreed that more time is needed for review of the ordinance.

### **c. Ms. Cora Fortuchang; Seeking to allow her tenant at 6836 Main Street to utilize the parking lot on the property to park commercial vehicles for his landscaping business**

Councilman Honore motioned to allow Ms. Fortuchang's tenant to utilize the parking lot property for the business commercial vehicles according to the parking ordinance; the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard for discussion. There is a concern that the lot is only used for the landscaping business and not as a commercial parking venue, and that it is in accordance with the ordinance. Zoning Administrator Bill Johnston is requesting a lease from the landlord with stipulation that the parking is a reserved use for only the tenant of the building. Bill stated that Mr. Maddox the current tenant of the landscaping business was informed specifically when inquiring about obtaining a business license that his utility trailer vehicles could not be parked on the property. That it could be approved as an office use, zoning for the property is edge and for office use. A variance is needed as the manner of use is not permitted.

Councilman Honore and Councilwoman Howard rescinded their motion.

### **d. Fees for landscape maintenance of abandoned residential lots**

Mayor and Council discussed the establishment of fees; range of \$75-\$1,200 description specific, base fee, Public Works Director Quinton Monson as the administrator of fees, legal procedures (warning, citation, maintenance fee, and lien), involvement of the land bank, if the Property Maintenance Code (PMC) should be adopted as the International or DeKalb code. Councilman Honore requesting a base fee for minor maintenance and a RFP process for major maintenance. Attorney Valorri Jones stated that the ordinances can be adopted in sections prior to adopting the PMC Ordinance in its entirety. A PMC ordinance has not been established for City of Lithonia and currently operating on what DeKalb has in place. Councilwoman Howard suggested moving forward to undertake the PMC as a whole and not piece by piece, Councilmembers were in agreement.

**e. Code Enforcement**

Councilman Honore proposed that Councilmembers provide reporting of properties that are not in compliance with code, and to share ideas that will allow for an action plan, to include reporting from the Code Enforcement Officer on progress made, the project entitled, "Lithonia Beautiful".

**IX. Mayors Report: COVID-19 Update, Councilmember District Update**

Mayor Reynolds stated that numbers increased tremendously over the weekend, Mr. Stanley Thomas on Jenkins Street passed away and will be funeralized on Wednesday. The street sweeper contact has been approved by legal as the process moves forward to initialize its use. Councilwoman Howard provided an update that the dead trees were taken down and the street looks good, reported to the City Administrator that her fence was damaged when the tree fell and concrete was broken on the sidewalk, will send pictures to see if the contractor can do anything. Councilwoman Inman indicated that a very large tree branch was down on Robinson Street for the past few weeks. (Mr. Monson provided response the following day that the Robinson Street property belonged to AT&T and it was their responsibility). Councilwoman Wynn wanted to know if FEMA's Outreach Program was involved with the city to provide extended care for senior citizens, no one was aware, Councilwoman Wynn will continue her research. Mayor Reynolds indicated that City of Lithonia's numbers for Census data is the lowest for reporting and the response rate is currently at 45.5%, asked that Council come up with ideas to get more response from the citizens.

**X. Executive Session- Personnel**

Councilman Dodd motioned to adjourn for executive session to discuss personnel matters; the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 5-0. The council entered executive session at 8:06 pm.

Executive Session reconvened at 8:40 pm.

Mayor Reynolds stated that information will be forwarded to council to proceed with next steps.

**XI. Adjournment**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Inman; the motion was approved by a vote of 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.