MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)

Livestream: https://www.facebook.com/CityofKennesaw/
July 8, 2024
6:30 PM

Present	Mayor Derek Easterling Mayor Pro Tem Antonio Jones Councilmember Madelyn Orochena Councilmember Tracey Viars Councilmember Pat Ferris Councilmember Anthony Gutierrez City Clerk Lea Alvarez City Manager Jeff Drobney City Attorney Randall Bentley, Sr.

1. Invocation

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Call to Order

Mayor Easterling called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

4. Announcements

A. If you are not able to attend a meeting in-person and would like to provide public comment on a specific agenda item, you can email kennesawcouncil@kennesaw-ga.gov no later than 6:00 PM the night of the regular meeting. Your comments on a specific agenda item will be read aloud or grouped into categories for the record. **Facebook Live is not monitored for public comment.**

5. Presentations

6. Public Comment/Business from the Floor

7. Old Business

8. New Business

9. Committee and Board Reports

10. Public Hearing(s)

11. Consent Agenda

A. **Minutes: July 1, 2024 Regular Meeting**
Approval of the July 1, 2024, City Council regular meeting minutes.

12. General and Administrative

13. Public Safety

A. **Grant Application: Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance for Body-Worn Cameras**
Consideration for authorization to submit a grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance to replace body-worn cameras.

The following item was added to the agenda for the work session.

Chief William Westenberger shared that a few weeks ago the Kennesaw Police Department found a grant for body-worn cameras. The department's current systems are aging and will need to be replaced in a few years. Chief Westenberger explained the total project budget is $136,000 with a 50% match requirement from the City totaling $68,000. Federal funding caps the price at $2,000 per camera and after three years, funding will not continue to cover subscription fees, charges or any upgrades. Chief Westenberger asked for approval to move forward with submitting the grant application.

After receiving confirmation from the Council, Mayor Easterling suggested moving the item to the Consent Agenda for the regular meeting.

14. Information Technology

15. Public Works and Building Maintenance

A. **Resolution: 2024 Pipe Rehabilitation Project**
Consideration for approval of a Resolution to award the bid and contract for the 2024 Pipe Rehabilitation Project

Public Works Director Ricky Stewart presented a resolution to award the bid and contract for the 2024 pipe rehabilitation project to Proshot Concrete. The City advertised the rehabilitation of pipes on Vintage Wood Way, Nuthatch Court, North Hampton Drive, Drayton Way, and Sumit Wood Drive, and received three bids. Proshot Concrete was low-bid for the amount of $277,610.00.

Councilmember Ferris asked if the proposals received were in line with what we have paid for in the past or if Mr. Stewart had noticed a significant increase. Mr. Stewart responded that his department budgets enough to do approximately $250,000 worth of work a year. The cost depends on the parameters of the pipe. The material cost is not that volatile. Labor is the majority of the cost, so it stays consistent with what we have done previously.

After receiving confirmation from the Council, Mayor Easterling suggested moving the item to the Consent Agenda for the regular meeting.

B. **Resolution: City Hall Roof Top Unit (RTU) Replacement**
Consideration for approval of a resolution to award the bid and contract for the City Hall RTU Replacement

Building Services Director Robbie Balenger presented a resolution to award the bid and contract for the City Hall RTU replacement project to T&T Commercial. The current unit is 105 tons and is around 20 years old. Mr. Balenger explained we cannot get parts for the unit anymore. The City received three bids, and T&T Commercial was the lowest bid in the amount of $313,491.35.

Councilmember Jones asked if this unit was bigger than the unit replaced at the Southern Museum. Mr Balenger responded that the City Hall unit was about three times bigger.

After receiving confirmation from the Council, Mayor Easterling suggested moving the item to the Consent Agenda for the regular meeting.

C. **DISCUSSION ONLY: Update on Cherokee Street Quiet Crossing**

Public Works Director Ricky Stewart provided an update on the Cherokee Street quiet crossing. City staff reached out to CSX to begin discussions on having a quiet crossing at Cherokee Street. CSX put staff into contact with SVT Engineering Consultants to have further discussions on costs, timelines, what is required of the City to get the application started, and what is required of the City if CSX were to approve the application. Mr. Stewart learned that the application itself could take up to one year. After the application is submitted, a study will be completed to see if the crossing is eligible to be a quiet crossing. Once the study is finished, the City is allowed to submit plans for approval to implement the project. However, Mr. Stewart stated that between those two steps, CSX could deny the application based on the proximity of the crossing to the traffic signal at Main Street.

CSX estimated that it would take approximately three to four years from application to implementation and cost the City around $750,000. Mr. Stewart explained that Croy Engineering recently finished facilitating a quiet crossing for the City of Smyrna. It took them four to five years and cost between $750,000 to $1,000,000. Mr. Stewart noted that with the amount of time it will take to complete this project, and the timeline for the Sardis Street Extension project, there is a good chance that before the City could complete the quiet crossing project, we will be 50% done with the Sardis Street Extension project, which will eliminate the need for the crossing anyway.

Councilmember Viars asked if pedestrians would still be able to cross when the Sardis Street Extension project is over. Mr. Stewart responded that the intent right now would be to completely close the crossing. So, pedestrians would need to use the underpass to cross. Councilmember Viars believed it was a lot of money for an intermediate step when the crossing would become silent anyways.

Councilmember Gutierrez wanted to make sure he was correct in his understanding that this quiet crossing project would only last two years. Mr. Stewart shared that if this quiet crossing is implemented, the City would be two to three years into constructing the Sardis Street Extension, which would include building a new bridge. Once the project is completed, there will not be an at-grade crossing on Cherokee Street because that section will be abandoned. Once the extension project is complete, the trains would not need to blow their horns because they would no longer be crossing a street.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones mentioned that about a month or two ago he received an email about a grant for quiet crossings. He asked Mr. Stewart if staff had looked into or applied for a grant yet. Mr. Stewart shared that staff had not applied for anything because they were still doing the leg work to see what it was going to take to do it.

Councilmember Ferris had many thoughts on this subject. On the one hand, proceeding with the quiet crossing does not seem worth it because of the timeline and cost. However, he heard a lot of people complaining about the train coming through town during the July 3rd festivities. He does not want to let go of the project at this point. Councilmember Ferris agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Jones to see if there is a grant that could be utilized. He was suprised at the price of the project, as Acworth and Marietta seemed to have paid less. Mr. Stewart shared that the cost estimate provided was regarding the project in its entirety.

Councilmember Ferris asked about the timeline for the Sardis Street Extension project. He has mainly heard a timeline of six to ten years, but tonight he has heard two to three years. Mr. Stewart responded that the City's road map is based on SPLOST and has Sardis Street being 50% funded by 2026. He further explained that at 50% is where staff would advertise or go out to bid. Councilmember Ferris wondered why the City would bid something out when the City only has 50% of the funding to do it. He asked why we do not wait until it is fully funded. Mr. Stewart stated that with the project being funded by SPLOST dollars, the City is getting revenue monthly. Councilmember Ferris would like to continue to pursue the silent crossing.

Councilmember Orochena said it seemed like a bit of a gamble to pursue the silent crossing for the payout to be a two-year headstart. She thinks there are more pressing uses for that money.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones would like to see staff continue to look for grant options to pursue.

D. **DISCUSSION ONLY: Public Safety Facility Update**

Chief Bill Westenberger provided an update on the upcoming Public Safety Facility. He shared the timeline of design of the building starting back when the list of SPLOST projects was being put together. Since then, numerous discussions and meetings have occurred with staff as well as with other agencies to create an exhaustive list of current and future needs. Currently, we are at 75% completion of design documents. The current Kennesaw Police Department is approximately 14,000 square feet and the current design for the new facility is 25,000 square feet. This increased footprint includes, but is not limited to, a community training room, a lobby conference room, defensive tactics training area, two wellness rooms, a fitness room, an additional break room, a real-time crime center, two additional interview rooms, office space for 16+ future staff members, and unfinished space at approximately 700 square feet.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones asked if it was possible to go vertical if we needed to in the future. Building Facilities Director Robbie Balenger stated staff would have to go back to the architect, CROFT & Associates, to answer that question from a design standpoint. He explained that was the purpose behind the extra square footage that was not planned for anything. CROFT & Associates CEO Jim Croft stated that the building is currently designed for two stories. He shared that the design could be modified to add on to it in the future, but there are significant costs and complications that will arise if you decide to go up to a third floor.

Councilmember Ferris asked why Kennesaw/Acworth 911 was not included in the facility design. Chief Westenberger stated that including 911 was not a part of the scope of the project. Councilmember Ferris asked if they had sufficient room to grow. He is visioning for the future and would rather spend the money once. 911 Director Nikki McGraw shared they will need additional space in the future, but it is a safety precaution to have 911 in a different facility than the police department.

Dr. Drobney stated that any amendment to the design is possible with dollars; however, the City has far-exceeded the budget that was set. He did not know if adding additional square footage was prudent, but if that is the Council's wish, then staff would pause and reassemble.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones thought the City should still look into adding another floor.

Councilmember Ferris asked how hard it would be to change the floor plan if it needed to be amended in the future. Mr. Balenger said the floor plan could be amended, but it would just be more dollars we would have to spend down the road. He noted that expanding the building is not possible because every inch of land was used for the building and parking lot.

Councilmember Orochena stated what she heard is that growth was sufficiently accounted for, so she is fine with the plan as it is.

Mayor Easterling shared he does not think pausing the project is the right choice.

16. Recreation and Culture

17. Community Development

18. Public Comment/Business from the Floor

19. City Manager's Report

A. Reports, Discussions, and Updates

20. Mayor's Report

A. Mayor and Council (re)appointments to Boards and Commissions. This item is for (re)appointments made by the Mayor to any Board, Committee, Authority, or Commission requiring an appointment to fill any vacancies, resignations, and to create or dissolve boards and commissions, as deemed necessary.

21. Council Reports & Discussions

22. Executive Session

Pursuant to the provisions of O.C.G.A 50-14-3, the City Council could, at any time during the meeting, vote to close the public meeting and move to executive session to discuss matters relating to litigation, legal actions and/or communications from the City Attorney; and/or personnel matters; and/or real estate matters.

23. Adjourn

Mayor Easterling adjourned the meeting at 7:17 p.m. The regular meeting will be held on Monday, July 15, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The public is encouraged to attend or view via Facebook Live.

Digitally signed by Lea Alvarez
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Date: 2024.08.07 09:27:01 -04'00'

Lea Alvarez, City Clerk