

**City Council of the City of Greenville  
Work Session**

**Monday, April 13, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.**

***City Hall is currently closed to the public. Virtual Meeting Viewing***

**Virtual Meeting Viewing**

<https://www.greenvillesc.gov/meeting>

**Telephone: 1-415-655-0002**

**WebEx Event Number: 714 491 533**

**MINUTES**

**CITY COUNCIL:** Mayor Knox White; Councilmember John M. DeWorken, Councilmember Lillian B. Flemming, Councilmember Kenneth C. Gibson, Councilmember Wil Brasington; Councilmember Russell H. Stall; and Councilmember Dorothy H. Dowe

**CITY STAFF:** City Manager John F. McDonough; City Attorney Michael S. Pitts;  
City Clerk Camilla G. Pitman

Mayor Pro Tem Flemming called the meeting to order for the purpose of discussing the following matters. Mayor White joined the meeting after experiencing connection issues.

**Budget and CIP Workshop #1**

City Manager John McDonough introduced for discussion the FY2021 Budget Workshop presentation, as located in Council's Agenda packet. Mr. McDonough advised that this will be the first of three workshops for City Council. Mr. McDonough provided the purpose of the meeting to receive feedback and direction from City Council in developing the FY2021 budget and referred to the focus of the FY2021 budget in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. McDonough stated that high level projections show that the City will be down approximately 10% percent entering FY2021.

Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director Matt Efirid provided the forecasted impacts on revenue for the hospitality tax, local accommodations tax, and local business license fees in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Efirid stated while there are trends of increase, the amounts are not anticipated to meet normal expectations. Office of Management and Budget Director Kai Nelson advised that businesses have been allowed to file hospitality and local accommodations taxes without incurring a penalty. Mr. Nelson stated approximately 60 or 70 businesses have not filed accommodation taxes and that those businesses will incur a penalty for not filing in a timely manner.

Regarding the business license fees, Mr. Efirid stated the year end projections are slightly above budget and slightly above last year and is approximately \$2 million less for FY2021. Mr. Efirid shared information on some other revenue impacts including the zoo, the parking fund, events management fund, and the Greenville Convention Center. Mr. Efirid presented a comparison of revenue resources between FY2020 and projected FY2021 and presented models of recovery anticipated with the reduction of COVID-19.

Regarding the hospitality tax, Mr. Nelson stated the current year's budget is around \$12 million, the year-end estimate is anticipated to be around \$9 million, and the FY2021 number is approximately \$7 million. Mr. Nelson stated the \$5 million difference is what will present City Council and staff with some struggles moving forward.

Councilmember Brasington asked what is being used to estimate the FY2021 accommodation tax. Mr. Nelson referred to reviewing economic information from rating agencies and banks data. Mr. Nelson stated that emphasis will be to focus on continuation of operations, such as paying payroll, paying debt service, and completing capital projects which require no additional appropriations. Mr. Nelson also stated as adjustments occur, staff can consider other capital projects. Mr. Nelson advised staff anticipates the recovery to be more like the L Recovery on the presentation, but not as far apart as the parallel lines show. Mr. Nelson also advised the time for returning to some form of normalcy is anticipated to be FY2023.

Mr. McDonough provided a timeline for the budget calendar and stated staff will continue to move forward the CIP projects that are already funded and are in the pipeline requiring no additional appropriations. Mr. McDonough reminded Council of its Top Ten Priorities developed during Council's retreat and stated the work plan has been prepared based on those priorities.

Department Directors provided FY2020 Highlights and FY2021 Goals and Priorities as included in the presentation.

Regarding the Fire Department, Councilmember Dowe asked about the increase in EMS calls. Fire Chief Stephen Kovalcik responded that the department was unable to obtain the number of EMS calls until recently when they installed the new CAD system. Chief Kovalcik stated that the number of incidents will continue to grow as the City grows. Regarding the ISO qualifications, Chief Kovalcik advised that ISO is resource driven and considers as part of the requirements the response time, the number of individuals on each vehicle, and water supply, among other things. Councilmember Dowe asked about the status of a fire station in the Fairforest Way area. Chief Kovalcik responded the proposed station is listed as the southeastern station in the mid-range plan covering Fairforest Way and Conestee areas and that he is currently looking for property.

Regarding the Police Department, Councilmember Flemming stated that information on strengths and needs involving recruitment should be included in the presentation. Councilmember DeWorken recommended considering a reduction in the neighborhood speed limit from 25 to 20 mph and offered to discuss his recommendation at a later time.

Regarding the City Attorney's Office, Councilmember Stall asked for a comparison of how the metrics presented compare to the previous year. Councilmember Flemming asked about the status of mitigation with utilities in terms of regulations. Mr. Pitts referred to the current bill in place recommending regulatory requirements and his anticipation of its passage following COVID-19. Councilmember Flemming also asked about the status of the inclusionary zoning, and Mr. Pitts responded the item comes before the state legislature every year, however, it has not gained much traction.

Regarding the City Clerk's Office, Councilmember Dowe requested an overall list of applications for each board or commission so that Council can review the number of applications available ahead of time for recruitment purposes.

Regarding Public Works, Councilmember Dowe asked about the status of the N-Step program and questioned the need to update the list. Mr. Murphy responded that staff was in the middle of developing a committee to evaluate the list, however, it is on pause due to COVID-19. Mr. Murphy stated the program is currently at level 13. Mr. Murphy recommended providing the evaluation list for N-Step projects to Council for review. Councilmember DeWorken stated he realizes his request for high end, high tech crosswalks will have to wait, but he will be recommending that request again for next year.

Regarding Parks, Recreations, and Zoo, Councilmember Brasington asked about the status of AZA accreditation. Director Marlie Creasey-Smith responded that accreditation will take place this year once the zoo is reopened. Councilmember Brasington referred to comments he has received in District 4 regarding the Cleveland Park Master Plan and requested an update on the status and the next funding requests.

Regarding Community Development, Councilmember Dowe asked if we have an idea regarding receipt of the \$2 million from Greenville County for affordable housing. Mr. McDonough offered to follow up with the County. Councilmember Dowe also asked about encouraging work force housing and stated she has only seen affordable housing. Interim Community and Economic Development Director Ginny Stroud responded she is working on recommendations for both.

Regarding Economic Development, Councilmember Stall recommended adding a separate line item for retention of current retailers. Ms. Stroud stated the City is also working on a business recovery strategy at this time. Mayor White encouraged staff to communicate with businesses sooner rather than later as a part of the recovery strategy. Councilmember DeWorken recommended looking at Charleston regarding entrepreneurship to strengthen and exceed growing businesses in Greenville once COVID-19 has passed. Councilmember DeWorken recommended being aggressive with economic development.

Regarding Planning and Development Services, Mayor White recommended expanding the Central Business District down Hollis Boulevard.

Mr. Efirm provided a list of CIP obligations which are contractual commitments of the City in the CIP. Councilmember Stall asked about the five year commitment to the Housing Fund. Mr. Efirm responded they are not including it at this time and are reviewing how to handle the \$7 million commitment from last year.

In summary, Mr. McDonough stated staff will continue building a continuation budget, identifying work plan priorities that can move forward without additional funding, and will provide a focus on revenue projections at Budget workshop #2 on April 27. Councilmember Stall asked when the actual budget will be available. Mr. McDonough responded it will be available in advance of first reading.

### **Motion - Executive Session**

During the open Work Session, Mayor White asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. City Attorney Mike Pitts recommended going into executive session under S.C. Code §30-4-70 subsection (a)(2) to receive legal advice concerning a pending litigation matter involving a proposed subdivision on McDaniel Avenue.

Councilmember Stall moved, seconded by Councilmember Brasington, to go into Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously.

(Executive Session)

There being no further discussions, Councilmember Brasington moved, seconded by Councilmember Dowe, to go out of Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously. No action was taken.

Discussions continued by Council in open Work Session. (See Work Session minutes for adjournment.)

Camilla G. Pitman, MMC, Certified PLS  
City Clerk