

City of Centerville
Special Called Meeting and 2018 Retreat
June 28, 2018

I. CALL TO ORDER SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

Meeting called to order by Mayor Harley at 9:00am.

Present were Mayor John R. Harley, Councilman Cameron Andrews, Councilman Justin Wright, Councilman J. Micheal Evans, Councilman Edward Armijo, City Attorney Tydings, City Clerk Krista Bedingfield, City Accountant Carol Harrison, Director Of Operations Mike Brumfield, Director of Economic Development Kate Hogan, Police Chief Chuck Hadden, Municipal Court Clerk Sara Caldwell and Fire Chief Jason Jones.

Letter of Engagement / Outside Counsel: Mayor Harley entertained motion. Motion made by Councilman Wright to adopt; seconded by Councilman Evans. Motion carried.

II. Invocation given by Councilman Wright.

III. OPENING COMMENTS ON RETREAT: Welcome by Mayor Harley.

IV. TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT MGRC Facilitated
Facilitator- Laura Mathis, MGRC, Executive Director stated she appreciates the opportunity to be here, introduced Marissa Jackson new MGRC team member. Ms. Jackson works in the public administration office.

V. COMMUNICATION MGRC Facilitated

Laura Mathis. General discussion among Mayor, Council, Staff. Different ways to communicate.

- Internal communication
- External communication
- Designate a PIO -Public Officer/ Public Affairs to get the word out to the general public and media.
- Monthly Newsletter
- Citizen Participation/ Citizens Academy

BREAK 10:45am

VI. COUNCIL / DEPARTMENT UPDATES (10-minutes)

- a. Mayor John Harley stated that he was very concerned about our governmental body, it has an internal communications problem. I believe it is fostered by a lack of respect for others opinions and by our inability to understand that we are working to make the city a better place to work, live and play for our citizens. To meet this goal we must all keep each other informed of what we are doing and why. We must be supportive of each other in the public eye. We may not always agree on an issue but we should always show respect for each other, both public and privately. Our citizens must be confident that we are all working as a team.

Dissension erodes confidence. Lively discussion with respectful give and take builds confidence.

- b. Councilman Cameron Andrews-informed everyone that he had met with Centerville First Baptist Church members George Slappy, Russ Pierce and Pastor Don Feezor. They talked about Centerville First Baptist Church's vision, articulated cities, blending these and how Center Park works in the frame work of this, develop friendship and relationship. Meeting went well. Mentioned to them about possible day trip to Suwanee in the future and invited them to go and build relationships. Centerville First Baptist Church (FBC) is supportive of Center Park. Discussion about potential property owned by the church. No motion or action taken at the meeting. This would fall under executive session-future acquisition of property and instructed City Clerk Bedingfield to add executive session to July 3, 2018 Regular Council meeting. They (FBC) did voice some concerns about alcohol in the park and recommended that the city develop an alcohol policy. Councilman Andrews stated he has respect for their concerns. Talked about the current state the church parking lot is in, discussion on resurfacing; no details just vision. They (FBC) feel confident we can all work together re: Center Park events.
- c. Councilman Justin Wright-(2) areas to discuss, one thing we do well is steering around the icebergs, one thing that he isn't certain is where the ship is going in the first place, the destination isn't always clear. This is a good date to have the planning retreat, right out of GMA convention, consider planning the retreat close to these events, key best practices. Public safety, serious hiring issue related to pay scale, culture needs to fix this problem. Parks are much bigger than we realize a large group think this is great. One advantage that we are a smaller community, is that we are mobile, Centerville can be the most excellent place to live, a lot of jobs in Houston County and great schools. Have an opportunity with town center continue to move forward. Public housing all have verifying opinions, we all do need some additional housing in Houston County, falls to us to lead the conversation, we are in a position to have a better understanding. Citizen engagement need to actively engage the citizens, engagement creates trust. GICH (Georgia Initiative for Community Housing) program that offers communities in Georgia collaboration and technical assistance in addressing their housing and neighborhood revitalization needs, revitalizing Keep Centerville Beautiful, and Citizen Engagement committee directed for Center Park.
- d. Councilman Michael Evans stated we all are here to work together and respect each other. A lot of things going on, have several goals that we are working on, we want Centerville to be a destination. Fire station is coming. Public Safety is a big issue, mentioned a recent presentation at GMA from the City of Douglasville-Police Chief they are staffed with 110 sworn officers. Center Park is big and we are heading in the right direction.
- e. Councilman Edward Armijo stated one of things he has talked about is where we are going, and how are we going to get there, better place to live, community, safer, this retreat helps us facilitate the discussions and get the ideas out here. Wanting to look at the pay scale study. Mentioned he and Councilman Andrews are to serve on the pay study committee along with department heads and discuss as a whole. Opinion on Affordable Housing is important no matter where you are

located, we as a team, leaders, community help facilitate the location, inquired is there a way to sit down and present and make it something we can share with the community. Enjoyed working with all department heads, we all have burdens. Glad to be here and thankful for the retreat. Informed all he will be leaving at 3:15pm for dental appointment.

- f. City Attorney Rebecca Tydings, spoke about last year, extreme highs and lows. Very busy, procedural strategy “coo”, ongoing FMLA, open record requests, reviewing contracts, conversations among department heads. Municipal Court, pre-trial diversion, new laws that are coming into place “Best Practices in Municipal Court”. Potential upcoming projects: consider recodification of Codes of Ordinances and personnel manual revision. Managing ongoing litigation. Human Resources falls on City Clerk Bedingfield and I; recommending more training. Also, would like to look at health and wellness program, important state of mind, annual update for employee, wellness fair, looking towards and actively working on, gives you a broad sweep.
- g. Municipal Court Sara Caldwell one of the biggest things is best practices from court from the state level. A lot of things that the state is trying to review is hands re: probation officers. How severe a probation officer can handle the offender, in conjunction with fees paid and cases closed, just the way society is moving. Try to treat people all of the same, with the low staff at the Police Department, merge some of the courts due to staffing issue. The judge depends on the salary, will be paying the judge the same pay every month even if court is canceled, we don’t want to waste resources with staff. Technology with software, e ticketing new program, it does have some cost feature, both Police Department and Court have to work together, officer would scan license and all data would generate into each violation. Update court ware, provides updates, several new options for the court, used since 2003, great software, exploring software for probation. Personally, would like for council when assigned over department make a first contact let you see how things are set up. What are their expectations and have the opportunity to engage with them.
- h. City Clerk Krista Bedingfield thanked Mayor and Council for approving additional administrative assistant position. This position will allow more opportunities to work closely with the Building Inspector to help alleviate different locations for services: Issue permit, set up inspections and allow notes to be updated in the software. Looking at the potential of scanning documents into the current software. Will be preparing to have both administrative assistants complete the elections certification training. Once they complete and certify, would provide a total of 4 certified staff members. Also, stated seeking additional training pertaining to Human Resources, Workers Compensation, Property & Liability Insurance. Have been with the city 18 years, hard to find classes that are not repetitive due to longevity with the city. Thanked Mayor and Council for their ongoing support re: education and training opportunities. Informed all that the office is busy, sometimes the office may look quiet however, understand that we all are working on tasks, and if they need anything staff is there to assist. Reported that we are currently at a 98.5 collection rate for property taxes, proud of the hard work and reminded everyone that this is done solely in-house no outside collection agency; saving money. Liked Mrs.

Caldwell's comment about council over department, come by the office to discuss their expectations and if they have any questions, please let us know.

- i. Director of Operations Mike Brumfield main concern today, future plans that are coming, Center Park, Church and pay study. Stress the fact, there is real cost to these things. The events held at Center Park, reported that his staff is assisting Mrs. Hogan and can take them away from other jobs for several days. The Gunn Rd project is complete. Have some projects re: resurfacing, there will be cost associated with these projects. The cities population has grown over 10,000, city will be reclassified as Class 2. With the new classification will have to address some changes re: water treatment. Also, growth requires sewer, currently have some sewer in the north end of the city which is run by lift station. Building's-City Hall and Police Department are in need of some cosmetic work, they have some age on them. Some of the offices at city hall have been re-carpeted and painted. Stressed to Mayor and Council that he hopes when the pay scale is reviewed Mayor and Council look at this across the board, not trying to take away from Police Department. My guys have to go into areas that none of us would want to and we have some great treatment plant operators if they were to make a mistake with testing, could make a lot of people sick, keep this in mind. Mayor Harley mentioned that the Enterprise funds operate and pays salaries for Water & Sewer employees and General Fund tax payers pay the Police Department salaries. Mr. Brumfield stressed he just wanted everyone to be treated fairly across the board.
- j. Economic Development and Marketing Kate Hogan stated she is wanting to discuss the 3-year marketing plan. Grateful for approval of re-branding Spring 2019, one unified brand for Centerville. The 2nd part hoping to get this approved in FY 20- Fall of 2020 branding initiatives, entrances into the city, what do want our tag line to be, opportunity to put our branding out there and show pride in our city. Recommendation to have someone with marketing expertise, this would be crucial, think there is an opportunity to expand on this, communications expert or PIO. Economic Development work with Next 360, great partner throughout have worked closely, ready and willing to renovate the Sears location. Business retention, business appreciation post in Newsletter, can feel a sense of pride, this will set us apart with our branding and networking. As we move along with Center Park and Downtown Development, looking at taking more classes. Economic Development may change in regards understanding what development is or aspects of community development to work towards the betterment of the city.
- k. Finance City Accountant Carol Harrison reported she has been with the city over 6 years this December. Things have been re structured a little bit, day to day cycles (tasks), monthly reconciliations, Feb-June Budget process, year-end closing schedules and adjustments, auditors will come in and do field work September. Deadlines payroll tax reports, W2's, affordable care act recordings, within 5-year plan as city has grown, new departments and funds. How is this going to flow? Stays busy and reported she will be requesting a staff accountant to assist in the coming fiscal year. Looking at the protection of the city, if she is out of the office, no one is here to continue the daily duties and work is backed up until she returns. GASB 68 takes 8 hours for one journal entry, this would give her opportunity for more training, it would be great to have another person when

working on the budget that can assist with the day to day. Also, mentioned that she will be a part of the Georgia initiative program. Several funds that are set up for projects currently; LMIG, sidewalks, fire station. You have to think beyond the projects, they are great; however, look at workload and cost.

- l. Police Chief Chuck Hadden provided a copy of the Hands-Free Law effective July 1; how proactive will the department be moving into this, spoke with City Attorney Tydings. Mentioned GOHS doing a great job to get the word out to the public. We want to give the violator the benefit of doubt, provide a flyer. We will start writing tickets July 1. Reported back in July 2018 starting losing staff/officers. Since January and February-short staffed. People want to move into Houston County due to great school system. Feels that the department is bottom on the list as pay goes for officers. Looking forward to the pay study. Right now, 6 patrol dedicated officers that requires 8. Good news has hired 2 cadets, will begin cadet school July 6. This is a 6 month turn before they are on the road. There is a turnaround time of 3 months in cadet training and 3 months FTO. Have budgeted for e ticket, there is a 2nd canine position that will be coming open. My main focus is personnel, there are good things coming.
- m. Fire Chief Jason Jones reiterated his department is also suffering from short staff, one man short on each shift, a lot of applicants that are not certified, Houston county starts at \$17 an hour, Centerville starting at \$13, will look at across the board with pay study not just Police Department. Public safety is a dangerous profession across the board. Doing what we can with the applications. Looking at hiring (3) rookies and do in-house training, will work with City Attorney Tydings to create possible contract. ISO audit July 18, big step, hoping to get credit for the ladder truck, hopefully will transition to Class 2, currently a Class 3. Looking at capital assets – have a (13) year old fire truck, have to think about big ticket items for the next 3-5 years. Rescue truck is 14 years old, have to look at financing, personnel, growth of the city will cost. Appreciative of the SPLOST our city depends on these funds. Main concern is how we are going to finance the growth of our city. Technology just had 2 computers crash, every few years have to have to upgrade. Looking into the future and how we can finance. Councilman Evans asked if we have had any further communication about financing fire service in the North end of city. Met with county, cities would take over incorporated island closest to their city limits, this went away. Station at Carl Vinson will have one staff Fire Fighter / 24-hour coverage Monday – Friday. After meeting yesterday, recommending to put a number out there with a one-year contract, and both parties agree after a year could continue agreement. City Attorney Tydings stated there could be a negotiating tool. Chief also recommended automatic aid agreements, this would also give ISO credit. Need to talk with Houston County Commissioners further and come up with a cost for Centerville Fire when responding to emergency calls. Mayor Harley mentioned the pay scale, all department should be treated separately and focus on each department. Mrs. Mathis said this is part of the concern, due consideration not just on one department.

Lunch- 12:23pm-12:50pm

- n. Plan Review Strategy- Director of Operations Mike Brumfield stated if affordable housing plans are submitted, recommending that the whole project be

outsourced to a 3rd party, someone who is an expert, a professional. It is time to get someone who can dedicate 100% of their time to the project and future projects. Councilman Armijo asked the question would the person be certified. Mr. Brumfield stated not sure what the educational standard would be required. Would have to look at this, potentially have an in-house full time professional. City Attorney Tydings stated we could reach out to the MGRC. Director of Marketing Kate Hogan said she had talked to Robert Smith in Perry and they have a community development officer, which this is part of their job duties, plays a significant role. Mrs. Laura Mathis recommended more of a community development department, they cover housing, facilities, zoning effort, a logical place to go. That the dept coordinates and can fit within existing structure. City Attorney Tydings stated we need to have objective, educated and informed professional that the city can contract out this service.

- o. Financial Check Up: Carol Harrison where we are currently general fund, quick estimate forecast presented revenue/ expenditures June 30, 2018. W & S Fund Unrestricted Net Position, SPLOST 2018 Projects, SPLOST 2012-Update, City of Centerville-Debt, and Property Taxes. Copy attached and made part official minutes.
- p. Fire Department: Timeline, funding, needs Jason Jones Fire Station, feels that the funding will be low on the amount. The requested 2 million will not be enough to provide all necessary items; office furniture, computers and equipment. Hoping to break ground March 2019. Completion date-end of 2019 first part 2020. Budget has been set 2 million, have concept of what we want to build, do not have finalized plans, moving forward need to review plans/revise and budget. More discussion to come.
- q. Center Park: Timeline, funding and needs. Director of Marketing-Kate Hogan mentioned Phase 1 of Center Park, stating she is planning on some ground-breaking October 2018 and initial construction hoping to finish up in March 2018. Currently talking with Robbie Dunbar re: dirt donated from HCBOE able to couple this donation with the \$100,000 Department of Natural Resources grant donation. Will have a public comments period that will close July 20, 2018, will send this to DNR and hoping to get a pay out from the awarded grant-October 2018. Center Park Phase 1- Goal for 2019. Councilman Wright mentioned that he and Councilman Andrews had some great conversations at GMA re: playground/ splash pad for recreation in the park. A real opportunity for these spaces. Strategy to make it as accessible as possible. Mrs. Mathis mentioned (2) new playgrounds have opened: Jones County and Forsyth. Mrs. Hogan talked briefly about branding. Open green space on the north side of the property, town center elements. Recommended DDA (Downtown Development Authority) in the future, would have to pass a resolution and KCB (Keep Centerville Beautiful) this chapter would be easy to reactivate. Councilman Andrews inquired about dirt for the park. Mrs. Hogan reported that there is a possibility beginning next week to move dirt. Director of Operations Brumfield stated it will take (5 trucks 5 days a week) for 5 weeks to move this dirt. We are ready at this time and hope to get started soon. Mrs. Hogan in closing stated she welcomed encouragement for all events. Ways to improve, great opportunity continuing on the building and growth with events in Center Park.

Mrs. Mathis recapped the below items prior to the conclusion of the planning retreat. See below key points.

- Internal communication- determine the best method to distribute information to all departments, Mayor and Council.
- Rotate council members as you transition, sit down and visit new department head, build up repour.
- When meeting with Council over department, finalize with council or Department Head, who is responsible for communication the information to other council members.
- POI- telling the story of the city, revisit social media policy, standard form of communication, feed info to newsletter-action items council meeting.
- PIO efforts with Perry how they communicate.
- Citizens requesting on agenda, implementing a form- get a sample form from MGRC.
- Citizens academy, how and what would it require, can we really implement with staff.
- Having rules of decorum read at every meeting; place on agenda.
- Plan review strategy P/Z training from GMA-RFQ for plan review services until we have the funds to have a full-time staff position. MGRC will get sample job description for City Attorney Tydings and Director of Operations Brumfield to review.
- Center Park-Phase 1 playground, moving forward with dirt; future Phase 2 with splash pad.

Mayor Harley entertained motion to adjourn meeting at 2:30pm. Motion made by Councilman Evans; seconded by Councilman Wright. Motion carried.

Mayor John R. Harley

Attest by City Clerk Krista Bedingfield

Date