



Prosperity & Livability Committee Meeting
Chaired by Mayor Pro Tem Ewing
Committee Members: Ewing, Hudson, Peters, and Golden
August 7, 2019 – 9:00 a.m.
3rd Floor Lobby Conference Room
Agenda

Present:

Chairman Jason Ewing and Committee Members Jeff Golden, Wesley Hudson, and Monica Peters [Arrived at 9:07 a.m.]

Also Present:

Council Member Britt Moore [joined the meeting at 9:30 a.m.]

Staff Present:

Greg Demko, City Manager; Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Meghan Maguire, Assistant City Attorney; Terry Houk, Public Services Director; Laura Altizer, Budget and Performance Manager; Roslyn McNeill, Budget Analyst; Ryan Ferguson, Marketing Manager; Robby Stone, Public Services Assistant Director; Lisa Vierling, City Clerk; and Mary S. Brooks, Deputy City Clerk

News Media Present:

Pat Kimbrough, *High Point Enterprise*
Lesa Layno, *Fox 8 News*

Note: The following handouts were distributed during the meeting and will be attached as a permanent part of these proceedings.

- ✓ PowerPoint Presentation- Oakwood Cemetery

Chairman Ewing called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Update- Shopping Cart Ordinance

Meghan Maguire, Assistant City Attorney, discussed options on managing abandoned shopping carts; and spoke to reaching out to other municipalities across the region and country for feedback on their procedures.

Robby Stone, Public Services Assistant Director, spoke to collecting an average of 25 to 35 carts over a several week period; and to recycling carts when there are no responses from their owners.

Ms. Maguire continued discussion regarding an option of drafting a city policy; said it would require a notification to be sent to the business owner, which would give them a timeframe to respond on retrieving their cart; and spoke to recycling the carts on an operational perspective. Ms. Maguire continued discussion regarding an option to draft a city ordinance; said the closest city with a shopping cart ordinance was in Savannah, Georgia; said the ordinance would require the business owners to have a cart theft prevention system plan; discussed vendors who provide those services; and explained the process of how the anti-theft prevention system works.. Ms. Maguire voiced concerns on how the potential options would impact businesses; and spoke to how such a policy could be a deterrence as far as location of stores in certain areas.

Chairman Ewing stated he did not want to adopt an ordinance that would put more of a burden on staff. Deputy City Manager Randy McCaslin asked if this would be a huge burden to staff from an operational standpoint. Mr. Stone replied it would not.

Mr. McCaslin asked the committee for guidance on the next steps to take; spoke to returning the carts to the stores as they are picked up; or taking the carts to the MOC to be recycled if the carts were not claimed by the owners.

Committee Member Hudson voiced concerns regarding the cost to the city to store the carts, pick-up the carts, and recycle the carts.

Chairman Ewing spoke to administrative issues on doing a tagging system process for the carts; and voiced the importance of notifying business owners when carts were retrieved in areas that would cause public safety concerns. He agreed it was a good idea to have staff continue to pick up any carts found within the city's rights-of-way, those blocking stormwater drainage basins, or anything that would pose a public safety risk.

Mr. McCaslin informed the committee that staff can send out letters periodically to the businesses informing them that the carts have been collected and instructions on how to pick the carts up.

Update- Main/Lexington Intersection Project

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager, advised that staff fully anticipated to begin the Main Street/Lexington Avenue intersection project after the 2019 Spring Furniture Market, but the timing has since changed. He spoke to the city waiting on approval from the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) which was just received two weeks ago. He reported that staff did talk

to the affected businesses in the area and they expressed concerns about the road being torn up and the adverse effect it would have on their holiday season. He reported staff anticipates beginning the project in the spring after the 2020 Furniture Market with hopes of having it completed by the summer of 2020.

Chairman Ewing inquired on the estimated timeframe for completion of the project. Mr. McCaslin replied it would take the full amount of time due to them keeping Main Street for traffic flow during the construction. He also spoke to having to replace the water and sewer lines in both directions during the construction period; to installing electrical duct line underground; and to having decorative sidewalks and traffic poles which would be completed in the second phase of the project.

Committee Member Peters asked for confirmation on a new location for a new ABC store. Chairman Ewing replied the High Point ABC Commission is still in the process of evaluating locations/sites and is working with the Planning Department on that.

Discussion-Oakwood Cemetery

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager, advised that some citizens addressed the City Council at the August 5th meeting and voiced concerns about the cemetery and in an effort to react quickly, staff was asked to put together a presentation. He then recognized Robby Stone, Public Services Assistant Director, who presented a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP) on the Oakwood Cemetery concerns.

Mr. Stone advised that 512 Steele Street was the location of the main office building for the cemetery; spoke to the access points at Steele Street, Ray Avenue, and Montlieu; and stated the access on Mint Street was permanently closed years ago. Mr. Stone continued discussion regarding concerns, requests, and recommendations as follows:

Concerns:

- *Used as cut through in shootings.*
- *Used as a cut through for general traffic.*
- *Used as a game location for the Pokémon game.*
- *Address is known and advertised as 512 Steele Street.*
- *Sight distance challenging when exiting cemetery to Montlieu Avenue.*
- *Safety for employees and visitors.*

Discussion took place regarding the details on how the Pokémon game is played; issues and the negative effects the Pokémon players cause during funerals, work, and other events. Assistant City Attorney Meghan Maguire advised that the city did reach out to Pokémon regarding these concerns and asked them to remove their “monster” from the cemetery, but received no response.

Request:

- *Support and funding for gates to control access.*
- *Identify only one means of ingress/egress.*

- *Identify a solution to uphold the reverence and respect of those buried and those visiting loved ones.*

Recommendations

- *Utilize gates to close off ingress/egress except for special occasions and emergencies.*
 - *Option: Utilize automatic gates to close off ingress/egress*
 - *Most costly.*
 - *Could control all access locations.*
 - *Option: Utilize manual gates to close of ingress/egress.*
 - *Most economical.*
 - *Create customer challenges to access office depending on placement.*
 - *Creates staff challenge due to maintenance building location depending on location.*

Mr. Stone spoke to using manual, automatic, and a combination of manual and automatic gates; voiced concerns with safety for staff; and to receiving guidance on the next steps.

Chairman Ewing inquired on a cost estimate for the gates. Mr. Stone replied the cost would be around \$70,000 for four automatic gates; and said the manual gates would be at a lower cost.

Mr. McCaslin stated the gates were not included in this year's budget; and spoke to installing an automatic gate at the Montlieu location, and manual gates at the remaining locations.

Chairman Ewing spoke to installing three manual gates now; and the automatic gate at Montlieu at a future date; and to installing speed bumps for safety reasons.

Mr. McCaslin spoke to putting up signage informing citizens to use the Montlieu entrance.

Mr. Stone spoke to the speedbumps already installed at the cemetery.

It was the consensus of the committee for staff to proceed and get firmer cost estimates because it would require a budget amendment. Mr. McCaslin advised since the committee is in agreement, staff will take it to the City Council. The Committee was in agreement that manual gates be installed at the Steele, Ray, and Mint Street locations.

Chairman Ewing inquired on the Montlieu Streetscape Improvement Project. Greg Demko, City Manager, replied it will be a ways off because they are still working on the design.

Committee Member Golden inquired on the timeframe for the extended hours for bus routes. Mr. McCaslin replied there was a shortage of CDL drivers; and spoke to the strict requirements the insurance company had specifically for bus drivers to have a two-year accident free record.

Chairman Ewing asked were there other insurance carriers who did not have a two-year accident free requirement for bus drivers, and inquired on the pay study conducted by the city for CDL drivers. Mr. McCaslin replied the city was looking at what other insurance companies

have to offer; and said the city would be making pay adjustments for these positions for better retention purposes.

City Manager Demko spoke to keeping up with the competition in the private sector in retaining drivers with CDLs and that GTCC will be starting up a bus driving curriculum.

Discussion took place regarding bus service hours needed; future developments which could demand more public transportation; and using bicycle lanes as a form of transportation.

Committee Member Hudson asked when additional bicycle racks would be installed at the baseball stadium. Mr. McCaslin replied the current racks were temporary in nature; and there would be decorative bicycle racks installed at a future date.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Prosperity and Livability Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:44 a.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary S. Brooks, Deputy City Clerk

Jason P. Ewing, Chairman