CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
2022 CITY COUNCIL RETREAT
Friday, February 25, 2022
Mount Holly Municipal Complex
Facilitator: Reeves McGlohon

Call to Order—*Mayor Bryan Hough*

Mayor Hough called the 2022 Council Retreat to order at 9:00am.

Ground Rules, Schedule, Parking Lot Items

Councilman Moore gave the Invocation. Mayor Hough advised that #8 on the agenda would be changed to discuss cones blocking public parking and #9 on the agenda would be Wrap up. Councilwoman Pawlish made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion. All Council Members voted in favor. Motion carried.

The following was stated as the ground rules:

- No interruptions
- Don't talk over others
- Respect opinions
- Debate ideas not people
- Provide clear direction to staff
- Everybody contributes

Prior Year Priorities/Minutes/Status

Mr. Braswell advised that he is very proud of staff for all that we have gotten accomplished in the past year. He advised that he did not realize everything that has been accomplished until the list was reviewed.

II. WWTP Decommissioning – Property Considerations—*Dave Johnson/McAdams*

Mr. Johnson advised that Charlotte Water has started construction therefore it is time to start the conversations in regard to decommissioning the Waste Water Treatment Plant. He advised that Charlotte Water estimated completion date for the pump station is November 2023 with a project completion date in 2024. Mr. Johnson suggested that Council start thinking about what they would like to see on the property once the decommissioning phase is complete. He suggested budgeting in the upcoming year the funding of a consultant to assist in the process. There was a short discussion regarding the rate structure that Council put into effect a few years ago. At this time, Mr. Johnson introduced Nick Lowe with McAdams to present options for repurposing after the decommission stage. Mr. Lowe presented 2 options. Option 1 was the expansion of Tuck Park to include additional ball fields, tennis courts, kayak launch and storage as well as other amenities. Option 2 was a mixed-use development that would include housing units, retail space, a restaurant and other resident amenities. Council discussed the options and the need for a new gym. It was discussed that the revenue from the residential space could help fund a new gym facility. Council agreed that they want to move forward with option 2. They also agreed to set policy that ABC revenue be set aside for Recreation. These funds will not be earmarked for particular projects but set aside to use for recreation projects. It was also discussed that Mayor Hough and Mr. Braswell need to meet with A and E management team and discuss the property and the potential of selling their adjoining property to the City.

At this time Council took a 15-minute break.

III. Finance—*Michelle Wood*

A. Revenue Projections—*Michelle Wood/Dave Johnson/Greg Beal*

- Housing Statistics

Ms. Wood reported on the financial status of the City. She advised that the fund balance as of June 30, 2021 was $17,396,516. Out of that, $6,507,724 is restricted or assigned. She advised that the estimated unassigned fund balance ending June 30, 2022 is $7,447,774.

Ms. Wood then reported that the housing growth is estimated an increase of 1.75%. However, she based the projections on the past 5-year growth trend and comes to approximately 4%. The Mayor and Council were very pleased with the approach to growth projections and the information provided from the Finance Department.

- Staffing priorities for FY 22-23 Budget

Ms. Wood reported that management staff was asked to submit requests for additional staffing. In the general fund were requests for 19 new employees. After review of the requests, 10 of the positions were considered priority. Mrs. Shoemaker advised that she would like to see a fulltime Economic Development Coordinator included in the upcoming budget. Council agreed that Economic Development and Planning need to be split as the city has gotten too busy for that position to fall to 1 person.

IV. Lunch

A. Working Lunch Item

a. South Gateway Property Development Plan by Regional Developers – *Charles Saleh / Wes Bawab*

Mr. Charles Saleh came before the Council with his team to present his development plan for his property located in the South Gateway. He presented his plan with building designs and advised that the facility will be an acute medical care campus. He advised that there are hopes the project will be complete before the hospital opens. He further advised that he will need help from the city in regard to moving and upgrading the road. The plans show the retention pond going through the existing road. Mr. Saleh agreed that he would give the land to make the road improvements.

V. Bond Project—*Jonathan Wilson/Michelle Wood*

A. Prioritize

B. Funding considerations for FY 22-23

Mr. Wilson advised that the next step to moving forward with Veteran's Park is finalizing the design and complete the property acquisition. Council discussed the next steps moving forward. They decided to continue to move forward with the property acquisition and hold off on the design of Veterans Park until the additional property is acquired. It was also the consensus not to pursue the Fites Creek Pedestrian Crossing at this time. Council also decided to move forward with the design of the Dutchman's Creek Pedestrian Crossing. Councilman

Meadows asked about the current debt and how it could impact future borrowing for upcoming projects. Discussion ensued regarding funding and asking our state representatives for excess money to help fund this list projects. Councilwoman Shoemaker suggested that proposing project's as environmental could aide in the funding. Council also directed staff to look into a public/private partnership for the development of the Veteran's Park property.

VI. Historical Society—*Brian DuPont*

A. Discussion of Municipal Complex vacant space

Mr. DuPont presented the idea and information in regard to relocating the Historical Society to the vacant space on the ground floor at the Municipal Complex. He advised that the City would be responsible for moving the historical pieces to the new location and paying for the upfit. Mrs. Anders advised that the Historical Society has worked with a historical consultant in the past and staff could probably contact them to help with the design. Council gave staff direction to move forward with the relocation plans for the Historical Society. The future of the old city hall will be discussed at a later time.

VII. Ransom Hunter Project at Glendale Park—*Mark Jusko*

A. Limbing Trees, Sidewalk, monument sign at foundation

Mr. Jusko gave the historical significance of the property and Ransom Hunter. Mr. Hunter was the first freed slave to own property in Gaston County with the property being located in Mount Holly. Mr. Jusko presented option to improve the property and identify the historical value. Council agreed to limb up the property and add sidewalks and make the property usable. They also directed staff to form an advisory committee to provide other options for the property after the improvements have been made. Mr. Craig suggested reaching out to the owner of the Honey Hunters for possible funding opportunities. There was also some discussion in regard to the old well that is located on the property and the need to identify the location.

VIII. Public Parking

Mr. Braswell advised that this issue was brought to him by Mayor Pro Tem Harris as a discussion item. Mayor Pro Tem Harris advised that the older population has been calling her in regard to the cones being put in public parking spaces in front of a business to reserve the space for food trucks. They are asking for clarification because a few years ago New Life Church was denied permission to block spaces. Council advised that it is okay to block the spaces.

At this time Mary Blomquist announced the 2022 Mount Holly Summer Nights lineup.

IX. Wrap-Up

Mr. Braswell thanked Staff and Council. He commented that Council gave good feedback and staff is ready to move forward.

Councilman Moore added that the City needs to look into selling plots at the Pineview Cemetery.

Ms. Shoemaker commended staff on the information and presentations.

Mayor Hough commented that staff spend numerous hours preparing for the Retreat and Mr. Braswell and his staff are to be commended for the information and preparedness of the topics. Great job.

IX. Adjourn

With no additional items of discussion, Councilman Moore made a motion to adjourn the 2022 Council Retreat. Councilwoman Pawlish seconded the motion. All Council Members voted in favor. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m. Miles-thanked council and staff.

Parking Lot Items to be discussed at future meetings:

Mayor Hough and Mr. Braswell talk with A and E management in regard to purchasing property.
Recreation and school board partnerships
Rowing Club as part of the mixed-use option
Stand-alone Economic Development Coordinator
Bond-Public/Private Partnerships
Sidewalk from Riverfront to Tuck Park
Sidewalks along Tuckaseegee Road
Strategy for State Funds
Cemetery as revenue for projects
Synthetic TIF at Tuck Park or other areas