

City Commission Workshop Meeting

August 3, 2020

4:30 pm

This Commission Meeting was conducted utilizing Communications Media Technology in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order. Some Elected Officials and Staff members were present in the Commission Chambers while others were present via the Zoom application to respect the social distancing guidelines.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor

Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:

Tambra Varnadore, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 2

Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2

Jonathan Davis, Commissioner-at-Large 1

Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney

Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Deputy Director

Scott Tyler, Chief of Police

STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:

Jeff Burton, CRA Director

Jim Freeman, City Clerk

Amber LaRowe, Assistant City Clerk

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

1. EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER RECOGNITION

Mayor Bryant and the City Commission will recognize the following City employees for their recent nomination as Employee of the Third Quarter:

- Tanisha Jefferson
- Donna Gross
- Rudy Gonzalez

Mayor Bryant recognized Tanisha Jefferson as Employee of the Third Quarter.

2. SURPLUS PROPERTY 11TH STREET

Attorney Barnebey reviewed the discussion from July 20th regarding this property. He stated that the lot is technically buildable, however, the City can put specific restrictions on it before it is surplus. The adjacent property owners are interested in the purchase of this property and may want to expand their residence.

Commissioner Williams inquired if the property could be out for auction with the highest bidder winning the property. Attorney Barnebey stated that the City can put it out for proposals and potential auction. Mayor Bryant stated, either way, the City can declare the lot non-buildable before accepting any bids or offers.

Commissioner Smith wants specific information on who requested the information from the City to surplus this property. He opined there are many issues in the City right now and it is not best to surplus this property. He would like to have an update on the Police Department before any property is surplusd.

3. ORDINANCE 2020-06 SIGN CODE

Karla Owens, Development Services Director, requested the Commission to discuss the attached page by page to make corrections and answer any potential questions. Attorney Barnebey clarified that the Reed vs. Town of Gilbert case was reviewed in the writing of this code to include content neutral sign regulations.

Page 3:

In regards to number 2, Mrs. Owens moved this to the end of the Ordinance to authorize Code Enforcement to enforce the Ordinance.

Page 5:

The repairs and maintenance section appeared twice in the Code so it was removed from this page and kept later on in the Ordinance.

Page 6:

Commissioner Varnadore preferred clarification for the specific approvals for signs to include detailed drawings; she opined that this could prove to be cumbersome for a small business owner and quite expensive to provide, is this necessary? Mrs. Owens indicated a change can be made to clarify that the application for the sign approval can be accompanied by drawings, etc. as appropriate and requested by the Planning Department.

Commissioner Williams discussed the section that indicates a 25 percent increase in the size of the sign has to be approved with the Conditional Use Permit? Mrs. Owens stated that if an applicant is requesting the sign to be 25 percent larger than indicated in the Code, the applicant will go in front of the Planning and Zoning Board for approval. Discussion ensued regarding the Planning and Zoning Board and the appeals process.

Page 11:

Mrs. Owens explained that the sandwich board signs information was removed from this section but put back in the Ordinance in another section. There will be a reference page to the Commission to show where replacements were made.

Page 13:

Commissioner Varnadore requested information be placed in this section to indicate to the applicant that a conditional use will first be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Board to follow final approval/denial from the City Commission.

Page 14:

Mrs. Owens is to remove “with the general standards of this Ordinance” in section 8 Sign Illumination.

Page 15:

Mrs. Owens to remove the first “that” in section 1 Motion, Light and Sound.

Page 16:

Mrs. Owens explained that snipe signs are those signs that are usually on a metal stake that pokes into the ground or those little signs that are on a light pole. Mrs. Owens will clearly define this so as not to mix with event signs.

Page 22:

Commissioner Varnadore discussed area and height as mentioned in Section (4)(b). Staff is recommending that the City no longer allow for signs to be taller than the buildings.

Page 23:

In regards to billboards, if this Ordinance is adopted, no longer will billboards be allowed in City limits. The existing billboards can stay and are grandfathered in at this time.

Pages 24 and 25:

These pages discuss electronic messages. This can allow for existing billboards to convert to digital and for the City to allow for digital billboards. Commissioner Varnadore is not in favor of allowing for a conversion, she prefers to eliminate billboards altogether.

Discussion ensued regarding billboards and digital billboards. The Commission would like more information on the rules for “scenic highway”.

Page 27:

This page is where verbiage was added as Commission thought was in the Code on electronic message center (EMC) signs. The specific guidelines are in Section 3-70.

Discussion ensued regarding churches in residential zoning/neighborhoods and digital/electronic signs. Planning and Zoning Board discussed light pollution when inquiring if these churches should be allowed to have the signs. Two of the board members were opposed to this with the other two recommending it be reviewed by the Commission for the limits of 10th Street and 8th Avenue West with those areas north and south along 8th Avenue where it would be allowed. This would be with a conditional use permit.

This item is on tonight’s 7:00 p.m. agenda for a public hearing with a continuance being requested to September 14th. Mrs. Owens intends to review the changes from tonight to bring forward for another review on August 24th workshop.

4. FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET VERSION 1 DISCUSSION

DUE TO THE TIME, THIS ITEM WAS NOT DISCUSSED. THERE IS A BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING ON AUGUST 5, 2020 AT 5:30 P.M. TO DISCUSS VERSION 1.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: AUGUST 24, 2020

JAMES R. FREEMAN

JAMES R. FREEMAN, CITY CLERK