

AGENDA SESSION MINUTES

Chattanooga City Council

August 30, 2022

Call to Order

Council Chairman Darrin Ledford called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the John P. Franklin, Sr. City Council Building. A quorum was present that also included Vice Chair Raquetta Dotley, Councilpersons Chip Henderson, Jenny Hill, Ken Smith, Isiah Hester, Carol Berz, Marvene Noel, and Demetrus Coonrod. Others present were Phil Noblett, Special Council to City Attorney, and Kyana Grady, Council Administrative Assistant.

Others in Attendance

Mayor's Office: Joda Thongnopnua, Chief of Staff, and Chris Anderson, Senior Advisor for Legislative Initiatives; Finance: Brent Goldberg, Chief Financial Officer; Regional Planning Agency: Karen Rennich, Deputy Director; CFD: Seth Hutcheson, Senior Firefighter; Transportation: Eric Asboe, Deputy Administrator; Downtown Chattanooga Alliance: Steve Hunt, Chairman, and Kelly Fitzgerald, Board Member; Second Presbyterian Church: Reverend Cathy Meyer, Pastor

Approval of Minutes

On motion of Councilman Smith and seconded by Vice Chair Dotley, the minutes of the last meeting (August 23, 2022) were approved as published.

Ordinances (Final Reading) – Agenda Items 5A, 5B, 5C, 5D, 5E, 5F, 5G, 5H & 5I

These items had been discussed at previous open meetings. Upon no questions or comments, the issues were closed.

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6A

This item had been discussed at previous open meetings. Upon no questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Resolutions – Agenda Item 7A

Mr. Thongnopnua briefed the Council on this item and the language changes. There were no questions or comments at that time.

Later in the meeting, Chairman Ledford opened the floor to the Reverend Meyer in regards to this item. She expressed gratitude to Chairman Ledford, Vice Chair Dotley, and Councilman Smith for creating this ordinance and allowing the church's concerns to be heard regarding the fee waiver. Chairman Ledford inquired about the length of time the church has been serving the Chattanooga area, to which Rev. Meyer advised that the church has been serving the Chattanooga area for over 150 years.

Resolutions – Agenda Items 7B – 7Q

These items had been discussed at previous open meetings. Upon no questions or comments, the issues were closed.

Resolutions – Agenda Item 7R

Mr. Thongnopnua and Mr. Goldberg briefed the Council on this item and addressed the following questions and concerns:

- All Parties in Agreement (Ledford)
- Requested Clarification (Henderson)
- Further discussion to coincide with Sept. 6 Agenda Item 7G (Hill)
- Praise to HR for initiative (Hester)
- Other Options Available (Henderson)
- PTO Buy Back Option Exploration (Henderson)

Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Resolutions – Agenda Items 7S, 7T, 7U & 7V

These items had been discussed at previous open meetings. Upon no questions or comments, the issues were closed.

Purchasing

Chairman Ledford requested Mr. Thongnopnua to brief the Council on the proposed purchasing requests. Mr. Thongnopnua obliged, briefing the Council on the requests. Vice Chair Dotley requested more information regarding the CFD purchase request, to which Mr. Thongnopnua deferred to Mr. Hutcheson. After briefing the Council on the CFD purchase request, Mr. Hutcheson responded to a statement from Chairman Ledford regarding the number of daily calls and an expression of excitement for this investment. Upon no further comments or questions, the issue was closed.

September 6th Agenda

Chairman Ledford questioned if Councilman Smith knew of any request to withdraw item 6A, to which Councilman Smith advised he was not aware of said request at the time but would follow up on the item.

Councilwoman Hill requested Mr. Goldberg to elaborate on item 7G. Mr. Goldberg and Mr. Thongnopnua briefed the Council on this item and responded to the following questions and comments:

- Constituents are not at fault (Hill)
- Clarification of conditions (Henderson)
- Position for the Council (Hill)
- Forgiveness rather than repayment (Hill)
- Concerns about not repaying (Berz)
- Addressing individually with employees (Berz)
- Other options (Henderson)
- Equal obligation - City forgives half, employee repays half (Henderson)
- Lump sum repayment / availability of repayment plan (Noel)
- Length of time for a repayment plan (Noel)
- Effect of deferring the item for a week (Ledford)
- Employee financial hardship (Ledford)

Mr. Goldberg advised he would send a visual representation of the timeline to the Council for review. Mr. Noblett then advised the Council of the legal options available to them.

In regard to item 7I, Chairman Ledford advised the Council to contact the Council Clerk if they would like to add to open sponsorships.

Chairman Ledford requested an overview of item 7J, to which Mr. Thongnopnua deferred to Mr. Asboe. Mr. Asboe then briefed the Council on this item, elaborating on the program and grant request.

Councilwoman Hill commented on the change order for item 7K.

Upon no further comments or questions, the issues were closed.

Future Considerations

Councilman Henderson requested elaboration on item 3C and questioned the number of departments involved in the proposed ordinance. Mr. Goldberg explained the item further, to which Councilman Henderson requested a breakdown for each department. Mr. Goldberg advised he would be presenting this item on the September 27th agenda but could prepare a one-page summary a week before that presentation.

Upon no further comments or questions, the issue was closed.

Other Business

Letter to the Council

Councilman Henderson advised the Council that he received a hand-delivered letter from Judge Bean addressing the Council and requested to add a reading of said letter to this evening's Council agenda. The request was approved.

Scheduling Items

Councilwoman Berz requested to add the following to the upcoming Agendas:

- Budget & Finance Committee Meeting to discuss the items which have been discussed during open;
- A presentation from the Hamilton County School Foundation focusing on the Arts Program during the Strategic Planning Meeting.

Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Downtown Chattanooga Alliance (CBID) Presentation

Chairman Ledford opened the floor to a presentation from Mr. Hunt and Ms. Fitzgerald, who covered the following:

- Language Edits
- Fiscal Year Changes
- Strategic Planning

- Reentry Program
- Program Evaluation
- Cost of Living Raise
- “Big and Bright”
- Graffiti Takedown
- Landscaping
- Implementing Process
- Churches and YMCA
- Work Left to Do

After the presentation, the following questions and comments were addressed:

- Improvements through the year (Ledford)
- Budget influx (Ledford)

Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Ledford adjourned the meeting at 4:43 p.m.