

CITY OF TRAVELERS REST
City Council Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 6 2022 5:00 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers

We will meet in Council Chambers but we also invite the public to join us on Facebook live: <http://www.Facebook.com/DiscoverTravelersRest>.

The following members were present: Brandy Amidon, Mayor, Rick Floyd, Mayor Pro Tem, Grant Bumgarner, Kelly Byers, Lisa Lane, Sherry Marrah, Wayne McCall, and Brantly Vest. Also present were Eric Vinson, City Administrator, Greg Robertson, Fire Chief, Mac McMakin, Assistant Fire Chief, Lori Sondov, City Clerk, Ben Ford, Police Chief, and Mike Forman, Planning Director. Absent was Dr. Shaniece Criss. The media was also notified.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Amidon called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

2. Public Works Committee

Committee members: Dr. Shaniece Criss, Lisa Lane, and Sherry Marrah

- a. Vice-Chair Lane called the meeting to order by roll call. Chair Criss was absent.
- b. Councilmember Marrah made a motion to approve minutes from the Committee meeting held May 9, 2022. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Lane and carried unanimously.
- c. Director Tate discussed the highlights of the Committee Report, including the continued calls for recycling carts, the wait for a quote from Greenville County Rec for a quote regarding a coating of the Swamp Rabbit Trail section in front of Loftis Printing, and the painting of a handrail on Main Street.
- d. Administrator Vinson provided a summary of the Sanitary Sewer Transfer Agreement, which would transfer the sewer system to Metropolitan Sewer. Administrator Vinson said the agreement in the agenda packet is the framework of an agreement that is still being discussed with Metropolitan. Representatives from the company attended the meeting. Councilmember Bumgarner asked if Council needed to provide an okay for the agreement to be pursued. Administrator Vinson stated the Committee could authorize the City to pursue the next step to prepare the final language and come back to the Committee or the Committee could recommend moving forward and presenting the terms of the agreement for first reading. Councilmember Marrah asked for an explanation of how changes made by the Department of Transportation (DOT) affects the public and private connections. Administrator Vinson stated the DOT is making the individual governing body be responsible for anything which falls underneath their roadways. Administrator Vinson confirmed for Councilmember Marrah statement that this change is a big one for the City because it now has to take responsibility for certain sections for which it previously had not. Administrator Vinson confirmed Metro would take over this expense if the agreement passes. Councilmember Lane asked the number of times Metro has taken over a municipality's sewer. A spokesperson from Metro stated this time would be the first, and Councilmember Vest confirmed the statement.

Councilmember McCall asked if Metro is prepared to do tap fees and work with developers. Their representatives said yes. Councilmember Lane asked what the statute of limitations is for Greenville County Council to approve the agreement. A Metro representative said once Metro's boundaries get expanded into Travelers Rest, then notification will be published in the newspaper and there are 21 days after the last publication to appeal or challenge the expansion of the boundaries. Administrator Vinson said the process is Travelers Rest completing its part of the agreement with Metro, which would give the impetus to Metro's part with Greenville County Council. Administrator Vinson added the process would probably be completed by the end of the year. Joshua Hawkins, Chief Technical Officer for MetroConnects, summarized why this agreement would be better for the City, noting the company is focused on providing sewer, has close to 100,000 customers, and offers free repair service in a timely fashion. Mayor Amidon asked Administrator Vinson to share his thoughts on the pros and cons of the agreement. Administrator Vinson said, from the City's standpoint, the City has not historically invested heavily in building sewer operations and maintenance capacity; therefore, it is a good time for the City to determine which route it wishes to take regarding sewer. Administrator Vinson said significant investments would need to be made for the City to continue doing its own sewer operations. Councilmember Bumgarner said he knew Travelers Rest would be the first municipality but asked if Metro done other organizations. A spokesperson said there have been six special purpose districts who have transferred their operations to Metro primarily for sewer consolidation because there is a good deal of maintenance involved in taking care of sewer operations. Councilmember Bumgarner asked if Metro is going to be able to deal with taking on multiple operations that need updating, then what will happen to rates. Mr. Hawkins stated since Metro is a younger system, there is a lot of newer pipe and that results in less repairs, and he confirmed Metro has a unified rate of cost. Mayor Amidon asked how a price rate increase would be managed. Mr. Hawkins said it would go through Metro's Commission, which is appointed by County Council, and noted the company does a rate study to determine if there is a need for increases. Administrator Vinson added if the City remains in the sewer business, it will have to do a rate study to determine the amount of debt to issue to make the necessary repayment, and he said it will cost the City more than if it has the agreement with Metro. Councilmember McCall questioned how the City could make sure it has representation on the Metro board. A Metro representative stated the appointments to the Board are made by Greenville County Council, but they are approved by the Governor's Office. Councilmember Floyd asked if the City's sewer operations would be the biggest expansion, but a Metro representative said the Gantt and Parker special districts were the largest. Mayor Amidon confirmed with Mr. Hawkins that Metro will be doing all of the locates and asked how the greatest capital need is determined. Mr. Hawkins said one path is with ReWa and their Wetland Program and another is a program by which Metro goes through the system proactively looking for repairs. Councilmember Floyd asked if Metro is going to be able to handle the expansion. Mr. Hawkins said the company serves the Slater-Marietta area, so its boundaries would not be expanding very much. Councilmember Lane asked if the \$10 sewer fee would continue for City residents. Administrator Vinson said there would not be a fee maintained by the City for maintenance of septic if the agreement passes. Councilmember Lane also asked about the use of the sewer fund balance. Administrator Vinson said there is some debt to be paid off, then the City will retain a sewer fund balance to be used toward anything applicable to sewer. Discussion continued regarding this issue. Administrator Vinson

recommended the item remain at Committee and an updated agreement will be brought to Council. Councilmember Bumgarner asked Administrator Vinson if he could send the list of questions regarding the issue to Council and would he consider posting them on the website. Administrator Vinson said he would send them back out to Council and would post the questions if Mayor Amidon felt it necessary. Mayor Amidon stated she thinks most people are interested in the fees and where to call if there is a problem.

- e. Vice-Chair Lane made a motion to adjourn and Councilmember Marrah seconded the motion.

3. Public Safety Committee

Committee members: Kelly Byers, Brantly Vest, Dr. Shaniece Criss, Wayne McCall, and Grant Bumgarner

- a. Chair Byers called the meeting to order by roll call. Councilmember Criss was absent.
- b. Councilmember McCall made a motion to approve minutes from Committee meeting held May 9, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bumgarner and carried unanimously.
- c. Chief Robertson referred to Assistant Chief McMakin to discuss a grant the department has obtained from Duke Energy. Assistant Chief McMakin noted the \$3,250 grant is weather-related and will go toward equipment. Chief Robertson stated the call volume has not gotten worse but has not gotten better regarding waiting on EMS response but noted the call time has gotten shorter.
- d. Chief Ford stated there were 40 calls for service for code enforcement and 24 warrants were issued. Chief Ford also said the department was going to be looking at speeding along Main Street throughout summer to keep it a safe area. Councilmember Marrah asked Chief Ford about the electric car chargers recently discussed by Council. Chief Ford stated the chargers were installed by a sub-contractor hired by Waffle House, but there was a disagreement between Waffle House and the contractor causing the chargers to be removed. Chief Ford added National Night Out will be held August 2 and he asked if Council would be interested in volunteering for the event.
- e. Administrator Vinson commented the building inspection process had gone up from three days to four days but has since gone back to three days—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday—depending on need for inspections.
- f. Councilmember Bumgarner made a motion to adjourn and Councilmember Vest seconded the motion.

4. Ways and Means

Committee members: Grant Bumgarner, Rick Floyd, Dr. Shaniece Criss, Brantly Vest, and Kelly Byers

- a. Chair Bumgarner called the meeting to order by roll call. Councilmember Criss was absent.

- b. Councilmember Vest made a motion to approve minutes from Committee meeting held May 9, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Floyd.
- c. Chair Bumgarner presented consideration of a master lease agreement in the principal amount of not exceeding \$750,000 relating to the financing of equipment for municipal purposes; authorizing the execution and delivery of various documents; and other matters relating thereto.
Councilmember Byers made a motion to move this item to full Council. Councilmember Vest seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- d. Councilmember Byers made a motion to adjourn and Councilmember Vest seconded the motion.

5. Planning and Development Committee

Committee members: Brantly Vest, Kelly Byers, Wayne McCall, Dr. Shaniece Criss, and Grant Bumgarner

- a. Chair Vest called the meeting to order by roll call. Councilmember Criss was absent.
- b. Councilmember Bumgarner made a motion to approve minutes from Committee meeting held May 9, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Byers and carried unanimously.
- c. Review of development report.
- d. Chair Vest presented a request to rezone +/-4.65 acres from C-1, Commercial District, R-M, Residential, Multiple Family District, and I-1, Industrial District, to PD-R, Planned Development District (Pinestone-State Park Road Commercial Property) (TR 21-16)
Director Forman gave a summary of the zoning request and noted the Planning Commission gave approval for the request. Chair Vest stated he believes the rezoning is a good fit for the area and he likes the repurposing of the buildings there.
Councilmember Bumgarner made a motion to move this item to full Council. Councilmember Byers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- e. Chair Vest presented a request to rezone +/-9.32 acres from C-2, Commercial District, I-1, Industrial District, and R-10, Residential District, to R-7.5, Residential District (TR 22-03)
Director Forman gave a summary of the rezoning, which is being requested by the same developers who built Velo on Old Buncombe Road and who wish to build a subdivision on the property. The Planning Commission approved the rezoning. Chair Vest asked if the City considered R-7.5 low density. Director Forman stated there are examples of low density in the City that are zoned R-7.5. Chair Vest also confirmed this zoning is 5.8 units per acre. Councilmember Bumgarner asked if the number of homes for the space was reasonable. Director Forman said there are examples of the same type of density near this location. Chair Vest stated his concerns over eliminating an industrial zoned location and locating the development so close to Travelers Rest High School. Councilmember Bumgarner said he would prefer a subdivision to an industrial or commercial development in such close proximity to the high school. Mayor Amidon stated the Council is trying to be systematic with growth and said she is concerned with the continuity of this development going up next to the high school because there will be

questions of accessing the Swamp Rabbit Trail and having a crosswalk or a streetlight. Mayor Amidon said she would rather see a Flexible Design Review District for the area. Chair Vest said he is concerned that rezoning the property to R-7.5 will create 44 homes on a nine-acre lot that will not look attractive from the road and will be cramped. Chair Vest added he would be more open to a Flexible Review District also. Councilmember Floyd said he is also concerned about people trying to cross over the road when traffic does not tend to stop for pedestrians at crosswalks in downtown. Councilmember Byers asked the density for R-10. Director Forman stated it is 4.1. Administrator Vinson told Council that Glenview Park is zoned R-10, but reminded Council there is a cluster provision in zoning that allows developers to cluster homes together to save some green space. Administrator Vinson added the R-10 zoning might give Council what it would like to see in this development, noting he would recommend the Flexible Review District. Councilmember McCall asked how the Flexible Review District would benefit the City. Administrator Vinson said it would benefit the City because City officials would know who they are working with, be able to approve a plan, and the Flexible Review would require the developers to present a specific plan and layout to Council and address infrastructure concerns. Administrator Vinson stated the new development would be connected to the Glenview Park street network. Councilmember McCall asked if developments are required to have two roads leading in and out of them. Administrator Vinson said there are access and connectivity requirements and, once a neighborhood exceeds 30 lots, it should have more than one access road due to Fire Code requirements. Councilmember McCall asked if changing the zoning to a Flexible Review District would be more appealing to Committee members. Councilmember Bumgarner said he thinks that choice is a good compromise for the City and asked if Council should not take any action on the item and send it back to the developers. Director Forman said there are a couple of options available: the item can be held at Committee and ask the developer to put together a statement of intent and a development plan; the item can be moved forward but would be more restrictive than what is currently being considered; or the item can be sent back to the Planning Commission but he does not feel there is a need to push it back to them because the Flexible Review District is more restrictive than what the Planning Commission voted on and is presented here. Councilmember Byers confirmed the area being discussed is an opportunity zone and questioned if the spaces are abandoned or occupied. Director Forman said the Tankersley Brothers own the majority of the property, which is currently vacant. Councilmember McCall stated the estate of Dr. Barnett owns the other piece of the property. Councilmember Byers asked if building a subdivision on the site would mean losing potential employers. Director Forman stated a portion of the property is orphaned off with no connection to Hwy. 276 and while four acres may be lost to potential commercial opportunity, the acreage is not a viable area for industrial use. Chair Vest stated he is trying to battle against overgrowth in the City as most residents are requesting of Council. Councilmember Byers said she agrees with Chair Vest but is conflicted because the residents participated in a Master Plan asking for low density residential growth in this area. Councilmember Byers said the Flexible Review District is a good compromise. Councilmember Marrah asked Director Forman to explain the Flexible Review District. Councilmember McCall said he was not opposed to a Flexible Review District. Councilmember Bumgarner asked Director Forman to share the options available to Council again.

Councilmember Bumgarner moved to hold the item and send it back to the developers for a Flexible Review District to be presented back to Council. Councilmember McCall seconded the motion.

- f. Councilmember Bumgarner made a motion to adjourn and Councilmember Byers seconded the motion.

6. Personnel Committee

Committee members: Rick Floyd, Dr. Shaniece Criss, Grant Bumgarner, Brantly Vest, and Kelly Byers

- a. Chair Floyd called the meeting to order by roll call. Councilmember Criss was absent.
- b. There were no previous minutes to approve. (At 6:50 p.m., Councilmember McCall left the meeting.)
- c. Councilmember Vest made a motion to adjourn and Councilmember Marrah seconded the motion.

7. New Business

- a. Administrator Vinson presented a summary of a City of Travelers Rest Land Lease and Use Agreement/Political Subdivision Partnership (Paving and Public Parking). Councilmember Byers asked for clarification of the parking lot. Administrator Vinson explained how it would look and noted the design is not finalized. Councilmember Floyd made a motion to approve. Councilmember Bumgarner seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

8. Miscellaneous Matters

None

Mayor Amidon mentioned the possibility of moving the meeting to 6 p.m. Councilmember Vest suggested possibly 5:30 p.m. Mayor Amidon asked Council to consider it.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business before Council and/or Committee, Councilmember Bumgarner made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Vest seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

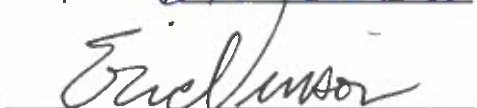
The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.



Brandy Amidon, Mayor

Completed by 

Lori O. Sondov, CMC, City Clerk and Treasurer



Eric Vinson, City Administrator