

Minutes - Draft

**PECS-Planning, Economic Development & Community Services
Committee**

Thursday, February 17, 2022

10:00 AM

Special Called Meeting

This meeting will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Simultaneous public access to the meeting will be available

*(1) via live stream on DCTV's webpage,
(2) on DCTVChannel23.TV*

Meeting Started At: 10:00 am

Attendees: Commissioners Johnson, Davis Johnson, Rader, Cochran-Johnson, Terry, Bradshaw

Present 3 - Commissioner Larry Johnson, Commissioner Jeff Rader, and
Commissioner Mereda Davis Johnson

I. AGENDA ITEM

[2022-1102](#)

Commission District(s): 2 and 6
Rename Rehoboth Park to Pea Ridge Park

MOTION was made by Jeff Rader, seconded by Mereda Davis Johnson, that this agenda item be recommended for approval to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Rader, and
Commissioner Davis Johnson**

-information provided by Director Ellis & Commissioner Rader

[2022-1103](#)

Commission District(s): 4 and 6
Memorial for Mrs. Sadie Sims at Washington Park

MOTION was made by Jeff Rader, seconded by Mereda Davis Johnson, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Davis Johnson

-information provided by Director Ellis

[2022-1208](#)

Commission District(s): 4 & 7
Golf Cart Purchase for Mystery Valley

MOTION was made by Jeff Rader, seconded by Mereda Davis Johnson, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Davis Johnson

-information provided by Director Ellis & David Flaherty

-Question JR: what is the average life span of these carts?

D Flaherty: it depends on if it is electric or gas. With electric the batteries last about four years. New Batteries are about \$2,000 each. Gas carts last about three times longer but have maintenance over their lifespan, such as oil changes. These are gas carts we are proposing to purchase.

-Question JR: do you have an estimate on the amount it's going to take for upkeep?

D Flaherty: I can get that information but looking the last few years with Sugarcreek we have probably spent \$6,000 in shared costs.

-Question MDJ: What is the life span of the gas carts? Was pollution offput taken into consideration in the purchase?

C Ellis: We can get somewhere between 12-14 years out of them. We like to turn them around every 5 years. The decision was not that we wanted gas it's the lack of availability at the moment.

-Question MDJ: so there are no electric golf carts available?

C Ellis: electric or gas it is hard to obtain golf cats at the moment

-Question LJ: these are not the older versions, they have low emissions correct?

C Ellis: That is correct

-MDJ: it is not that I don't support the carts but I believe it's important that people know about the emissions and what we are presenting

II. DISCUSSION

FY22 Proposed Budget - Budget Requests

Planning & Sustainability

-Planning and Sustainability budget presentation presented by Director Baker

-Question LJ: based on your presentation, you're also saying we are already working on affordable housing in DeKalb?

A Baker: yes, the LGD Affordable Housing on Kensington project has 200 units of affordable housing - off of Kensington station.

-Question LJ: when did you begin working on this project?

A Baker: The project was approved between a year and 18 months ago. It is coming out of the ground. This is the project that the Board approved at Memorial Drive and Covington, where you asked the developer to set aside some workforce housing units.

-LJ: I want to know the hours that you all have put into 2021. What you all have done is incredible work, and are the epicenter for a lot of the economic development and growth we have. There is development happening in DeKalb; what we're seeing is the evolution of us moving from a mall-centric community to now a development service delivery model that is more freestanding as things used to be.

LJ: I notice is you don't have enforcement power, we have to go to the police to shut down illegal operations, we need to look into why. I also want a slide that outlines the hours you have had to put into these projects and provide a breakdown of how much work it takes.

MDJ requests copy of presentation

MDJ: one of the misconceptions we are facing is DeKalb is not addressing affordable housing; this presentation shows we have two housing projects in the making right now. Please continue to spotlight that to show that this is not just an issue in DeKalb County, but around the country; we often set the path for others to follow.

-Question JR: What are the steps you are taking to bring multiple elements of your team together virtually to still solve problems?

A Baker: Even though we are closed we are always available for Zoom meetings and to meet one on one with applicants that are having issues either needing help understanding the code or meeting the requirements. Once we review an application and identify an issue we suggest a zoom meeting to review. Regarding major projects we always suggest having a pre-submittable roundtable with staff; we can do that via Zoom to discuss expectations. The issue for us is communication and making sure the applicants is aware that we are available for those meetings. I stress this with my Development Oversight committee meetings as well, that we hold on a bimonthly basis.

-Question LCJ: you all are still receiving a lot of calls even with the update to the Hanson system. Is there anything we can do to help the system be more user friendly? The bulk of the emails or calls we get is of people that cannot get through the process. So we have any educational tools to help applicants?

A Baker: We have drafted a video to help people get through the process. We have also suggested of hosting a webinar to help people. We have Mr. Rhymer on to discuss how people can better utilize the system.

G Rhymer: we are updating the customer portal; the new portal will be launched around the end of June or early July this year. The new portal will cut down on incomplete submissions to the single digits.

A Baker: Our current system doesn't stop you if you have submitted an incomplete application; the update will make sure the required steps are taken to have a complete applicant.

-Question LCJ: Do the affordable housing units you are currently building fall more in line with the 600 per year that are part of the comprehensive plan or are the projects processed as they come?

A Baker: I will have to coordinate with Mr. Mitchell to make sure we combine the two. The ones we are showing are private developments that we are processing. If we combine the ones with Mr. Mitchell, regarding working with non-profits and those receiving tax credits, then we'll have a total number. We can work on getting you those numbers.

-Question TT: regarding the ARC Green Communities goal for this year, are we aligning those goals to achieve gold status, up from bronze where we are now?

A Baker: we have hired a new sustainability coordinator. I have asked him to assess where we were lacking in the previous submission; he has looked at that as well as all the minutes from the Green Policy ad hoc committee to ensure we understood the policy direction the committee wanted us to tackle. In our budget presentation we are bringing on 2 or 3 interns to help achieve these goals. We are working on developing a 'Green Team' from representatives from departments to address all the policy directions identified. I will get with Mr. Teachout and Mr. Kenna so that we will fully circle back to ensure we are achieving the goals we are trying to achieve

Question TT: my understanding is we are doing everything already to receive gold status but just making sure we have complete documentation to the ARC. Can you share a little about the discussions around redesigning of the Zoning signs, which can be hard to see or understanding if it seemed to be written in bad marker.

LJ: this isn't new; we discussed having signs big enough for people to read it, so I'm not sure why we've reverted to small

ones. It used to be signs were made by Roads & Drainage.

-information provided by Andrew Baker regarding signs

A Baker: we will circle back to PECS to discuss the costs for the types of signs; if needed we can present a Midyear amendment for new signs to replace the old ones.

TT: The new designs allow for an art rendering to help people get educated on the type of hearing and make sure they know what is happening and be involved.

-LJ: now we will have discussion of 2 requests received from Lucious Sanders and Trails; one is \$500,000 and the other \$250,000. Commissioner Rader you had one for the Rec Center in Mason Mill Park?

JR: the rec center in Mason Mill Park needs replacement and RPCA has been doing some work. I thought that we'd bring that along in committee. The number is \$500,000 for planning and design of the study.

-LJ: those are the 3 items that we have - the Henderson Recreation Center, Lucious Sanders, and the funding for the Mason Mill replacement

TT: what about the small area plans?

JR: I saw \$300,000 dedicated in the department budget for that

COO Williams: The funding source will be in the existing budget for those studies.

-information provided by Director Baker

-A Baker: with the \$369,000 we can potentially do a LCI-type study and 3 small area studies or more depending on nature; we will work with the Commission to determine the priority regarding what we want to do with those small area studies. So we have a pot of money in the budget for Professional Services.

JR: motion to recommend approval of planning and siting funding for Lucious Sanders replacement, Mason Mill replacement, and for this trail plan. \$500,000 for each of the recreation centers and \$250,000 for the trail study

Seconded MDJ

Vote: yes unanimous

Henderson Recreation Center study

Lucious Sanders Recreation Center study

Trails Study

Mason Mill Recreation Center study

-COO Williams: there may be a series of minor items that have come to us from the Board of Commissioners that we will be prepared to present at FAB.

LJ: if it's coming for PECS I want you to tell me ahead of time. One of the items that may come up is the item of more case managers to help Human Services related to seniors, who are accessing more services than before and has a wait list. Mr. Scott can give you more detail on that.

-information provided by Director Sigler and COO Williams regarding PECS related budget Amendments

Meeting Ended At: 11:19AM

MOTION was made by Mereda Davis Johnson, seconded by Jeff Rader, that this agenda item be adjourned meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Davis Johnson

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC