

AGENDA SESSION MINUTES

Chattanooga City Council

December 13, 2022

Call to Order

Council Chairman Darrin Ledford called the meeting to order at 3:30 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, and Councilpersons Chip Henderson, Jenny Hill, Ken Smith, Carol Berz, Isiah Hester, Marvene Noel, and Demetrus Coonrod. Other participants present were Phil Noblett, Interim City Attorney, and Kyana Grady, Council Administrative Assistant.

Others in Attendance

Mayor's Office: Joda Thongnopnua (Chief of Staff), Julia Bursch (Deputy Chief Operating Officer), and Chris Anderson (Senior Advisor for Legislative Initiatives); Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition: Mike Smith (Executive Director); Office of Homelessness and Supportive Housing: Sam Wolfe (Director); Regional Planning: Karen Rennich (Deputy Director); Parks and Outdoors: Scott Martin (Administrator).

Approval of Minutes

On the motion of Councilman Smith and seconded by Vice Chair Dotley, the minutes of the last meeting (December 6, 2022) were approved as published.

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6A

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

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6B

Councilwoman Coonrod inquired about the fee change. Mr. Thongnopnua further explained, and a discussion ensued. Councilwoman Hill noted that during the presentation a park was miscategorized in District 2 and advised the correction will be reflected in the legislation. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6C

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

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6D

Chairman Ledford requested Administration to update the Council on this item and the proposed changes. Mr. Anderson further elaborated. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6E

Councilman Henderson requested further information on the Administration’s plan for the 6-month extension, advising he is concerned with the possible results. Mr. Thongnopnua and Mr. Anderson spoke for Administration, elaborating on the estimated timeline and expectations for the extended moratorium.

Discussion ensued. Councilwoman Coonrod expressed concern about enforcement, the proposed fee changes, and the AHO position. Chairman Ledford inquired on the differences in the two versions presented. Councilwoman Hill spoke in support of the 6-month extension.

Councilman Henderson advised that the City Attorney has prepared an amendment, which he requested to present to Council next week. After conferring with Chairman Ledford, the amendment will be added to the Council’s December 20th Strategic Planning Meeting agenda for review and discussion. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6F

Councilman Henderson advised of his intent to move to withdraw this item per the applicant’s request. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6G - 6K

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

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6L

Councilman Hester advised of his intent to defer this item for one month. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6M

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

Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6N

Councilwoman Noel stated she has been unsuccessful in contacting the applicant. Ms. Rennich advised she reached out by email to the applicant but has also been unsuccessful in contact. Due to this information, Councilwoman Noel advised of her intent to move to deny this item. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Resolutions – Agenda Item 7A

Councilman Henderson advised that an alternate version is needed for language change and clarification for this item. Mr. Noblett advised that the alternate version would be ready for presentation at tonight’s meeting. Chairman Ledford advised the Council of a special presentation on this item following the order of business for this meeting. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Purchasing Questions

Regarding the Purchasing RFP, Councilwoman Hill expressed her excitement to see this item proposed, and her hope for the future of this item. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

December 20th Proposed Agenda

Vice Chair Dotley inquired on the amount for item 7f, to which Mr. Thongnopnua advised the amount would be added before this evening's meeting. Chairman Ledford advised that Mr. Martin would present more information on this item during the Parks and Public Works Committee meeting following the Agenda Session. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

Special Presentation: Budgetel Response

Chairman Ledford opened the floor to a presentation from Mr. Thongnopnua, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Wolfe regarding the Budgetel Inn and Suites crisis. The presentation included the following:

[Mr. Thongnopnua:](#)

- Introduction

[Mr. Smith:](#)

- Introduction/ Background to Chattanooga Homeless Coalition
- Community Partners and Involvement
- Number of People Impacted
- Hotels Secured in Hamilton County
- Ongoing Efforts/ Housing Navigators
- Permanent Housing Placement Data
- 3 Month Timeline
- Housing Process
- Cost Breakdown/ Flex Fund

[Mr. Wolfe:](#)

- Collaboration with the Homeless Coalition
- Gratitude to Casey Tinker and Staff
- Frequently Asked Questions:
 - Verification Process
 - Support
 - Use of Resources
 - Purpose
 - Other Needs
 - Budgetel Re-opening

On conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Thongnopnua, Mr. Smith and Mr. Wolfe addressed the following questions and comments:

- Inquiry of the number of those medically fragile displaced (Hester)
 - Mr. Wolfe advised he would send those numbers
- Hotel Room Coordination/ Frequency of Communication (Henderson)
- History of Similar Events/ Inquiry on government support (Hill)
- Cost of Permanent Housing vs Extended Stay Hotels (Hill)
- Household Compositions/ Number of Children Displaced (Ledford)

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

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Ledford adjourned the meeting at 4:42 p.m.