

# AGENDA SESSION MINUTES

## Chattanooga City Council

### June 20, 2023

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#### Call to Order

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Council Chair Raquetta Dotley called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the John P. Franklin, Sr. City Council Building. A quorum was present that also included Councilpersons Chip Henderson, Darrin Ledford, Isiah Hester, Carol Berz, and Marvene Noel. Council Vice Chair Jenny Hill arrived after the call to order, and Councilwoman Demetrus Coonrod joined the quorum at 4:11 p.m. Councilman Ken Smith was not in attendance of this meeting. Phil Noblett, City Attorney, and Melissa Bardoner, Council Support Specialist, were also present.

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#### Other Participants in Attendance

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Mayor's Office: Jermaine Freeman, Chief of Staff; Finance: Vickie Haley, City Finance Officer; Downtown Chattanooga Alliance: Steve Brookes, Executive Director; Parks & Outdoors: Scott Martin, Administrator; and Velvet Poetry Productions: Erika Roberts, Principal Creative Director.

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#### Approval of Minutes

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**On the motion of Councilman Ledford** and seconded by Councilman Hester, the minutes of the last meeting (June 13, 2023) were approved as published.

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#### Ordinances (Final Reading) – Agenda Item 5A

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Councilwoman Berz advised that the body of the ordinance would need to be amended due to a clerical error but that this correction would not affect the readings. Ms. Haley and Mr. Noblett affirmed. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

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#### Ordinances (Final Reading) – Agenda Item 5B

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

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#### Ordinances (Final Reading) – Agenda Items 5C & 5D

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C. Case No. 2023-0063

D. Case No. 2023-0068

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

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#### Ordinances (Final Reading) – Agenda Item 5E Case No. 2023-0069

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Councilwoman Berz informed Council that the alternate version of this ordinance would be read at the 6:00pm Council meeting. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

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**Ordinances (Final Reading) – Agenda Items 5F – 5I**

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F. Case No. 2023-0062

G. Case No. 2023-0066

H. Case No. 2023-0067

I. Case No. 2023-0065

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

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**Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6A**

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Upon no questions or comments, the issue was closed.

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**Ordinances (First Reading) – Agenda Item 6B**

**Case No. MR-2023-0039**

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Upon no questions or comments, the issue was closed.

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**Resolutions – Agenda Items 7A – 7I**

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Upon no questions or comments, the issues were closed.

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**Resolutions – Agenda Item 7J**

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Councilman Henderson requested language be added regarding the economic impact on the city budget. Mr. Freeman affirmed. Councilwoman Berz requested confirmation that further discussion would take place regarding the proposed TIF. Mr. Freeman affirmed. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

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**Resolutions – Agenda Items 7K – 7M**

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Upon no questions or comments, the issues were closed.

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**NEXT WEEK'S PROPOSED AGENDA (June 27, 2023)**

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Councilman Ledford advised he had questions, which he would send in writing, regarding the proposed resolution to enter a partnership with a city in Ukraine. Councilman Ledford also expressed concern over the City's potential financial commitment. Mr. Freeman responded.

Upon no objection from Council, Chair Dotley deferred this item to the July 11, 2023, Agenda.

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**OTHER BUSINESS**

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**Downtown Chattanooga Alliance (DCA) FY23-24 Budget Presentation**

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Mr. Brookes gave a brief overview of the budget [can be viewed [here](#)]. At the conclusion, Chair Dotley opened the floor for questions or comments from Council. Vice Chair Hill applauded the installation of planters along the Fourth Street exit ramp leading to downtown. Councilman Ledford requested additional information regarding DCA's redefined priorities as of 2022. Mr. Brookes responded. Upon no further questions or comments, the issue was closed.

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## DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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### **Parks & Outdoors Plan (POP) Presentation**

Mr. Martin introduced Ms. Roberts, who recited her poem 'Visions of Value'. Mr. Martin then introduced the rest of his team before presenting the [POP](#). The presentation can be viewed [here](#), and included information on the following:

- A brief history of past planning efforts for Chattanooga's park systems:
  - 'Nolen Plan' of 1911
  - Tennessee Riverpark Masterplan of 1985
- The state of Chattanooga's park systems today:
  - Quality assessment of the current parks and facilities
  - Which areas are served by, and have access to, parks
  - How many park acres per resident we have vs. the national average
- The input received from residents regarding:
  - Their current park use
  - Their current park access & barriers to access
  - The park facilities and amenities needed most
- The importance the park system plays in protecting Chattanooga's natural resources and wildlife
- POP Principles and Primary Values:
  - Access – everyone should have easy access to a park
  - Equity – acknowledge & address the parks in disadvantaged areas
  - Nature – recognize, identify & preserve the flora and fauna that makes Chattanooga unique
  - Place – celebrate what makes Chattanooga special
  - Quality – parks & facilities need to be maintained to continue being useful
- POP recommendations based on public input:
  - Fix – repair & improve existing parks
  - Build – new parks & facilities in areas with critical gaps
  - Connect – create new blueways & greenway trails
  - Preserve – protect 700+ acres of existing City owned vacant land for natural wildlife habitats & potentially create an 'Urban Ecology Preserve'
- Solutions for better cared Public Parks:
  - Park Volunteer Steward Program:
    - Add partnerships with corporations, non-profits, and bodies of faith
  - Commit to adopting Maintenance Impact Statements for all amenities
  - Create private/public opportunities to supplement maintenance & upkeep
  - Add 6-10 Park Care Professionals:
    - Trail Rangers
    - Gardeners & arborists
    - Skilled Trades expertise (mechanical, carpentry, plumbing, playground leads)
- Solutions to increase resident engagement:
  - Establish a Parks & Outdoors Advisory Commission
  - Embrace the National Park City Initiative
  - Create a Donor & Partner Support Program
- The three phases of the POP and what each phase entails:
  - PHASE 1 (Short Term):
    - 16 miles of new greenway trails & connectors
    - 28 miles of blueway paddle trails along the river
    - 19 park upgrades & addressing system-wide deferred maintenance

- 7 new neighborhood parks & 4 new special use facilities
  - PHASE 2 (Medium Term):
    - 31 miles of new greenway trails & connectors
    - New amenities along the 16 miles of blueway paddle trails
    - 31 park upgrade or redevelopment projects
    - 10 new neighborhood parks & 9 new special use facilities
  - PHASE 3 (Long Term):
    - 71 miles of new greenway trails & connectors
    - New amenities along 8 miles of blueway paddle trails
    - 17 new neighborhood parks & 4 new special use facilities
- Actions for Council consideration next week (June 27, 2023):
  - Adoption of the 2023 Parks & Outdoors Plan (POP)
  - Direct Administration to:
    - Explore the 'Urban Ecology Preserve' designation for POP recommended city-owned parcels of land
    - Prepare the governance structure for a resident led, Council appointed Parks & Outdoors Advisory Commission

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Martin responded to questions and comments from the Council. The following discussions ensued:

- What a 'Park City' is and what it entails (Henderson)
  - Mr. Martin responded & referred Council to the National Park City Foundation [website](#) for more information
- Why was the Chattanooga Zoo at Warner Park not included in the POP (Henderson)
  - Mr. Martin responded
- Appreciation was expressed for the POP, as well as the people who put it together (Ledford, Hill, Hester, Berz, and Noel)
- Can the POP be factored into the permitting process required for developers (Berz)
  - Mr. Martin responded
- What is needed to start work on the POP & what is needed to complete the POP before the currently proposed year of 2050 (Berz)
  - Mr. Martin responded

Upon no further questions, the issue was closed.

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## **Adjournment**

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There being no further business, Chair Dotley adjourned the meeting at 4:28 p.m.