

**City of Tifton
Council Retreat
January 21, 2018
12:00 PM
Atlanta Marriott Marquis, Room L402, Atlanta, GA**

Attendees

Mayor Julie Smith

Vice Mayor Wes Ehlers

Council Member Jack Folk

Council Member Johnny Terrell

Council Member Frank Sayles

Pete Pyrzenski, City Manager

Rob Wilmot, City Attorney

Wayne Putnal, Finance Director

Jessica Jones, City Clerk

Mr. Pyrzenski opened the retreat with a brief review of the 2017 Council Priorities. Mr. Pyrzenski mentioned most of the items have been completed but wanted to review and carry forward addressing top priorities for 2018. Council briefly discussed the continued garbage and curbside pickup issues with Golden Environmental. After discussion, Council requested Mr. Pyrzenski send another letter to Golden requesting he comply with the service agreement. Vice Mayor Ehlers mentioned he would like to consider partnering with the County on the proposed Drug Court Reporting Center. Council discussed and requested more information before moving forward. Mayor Smith suggested Ehlers and herself meet with Judge Reinhardt and Judge Benson and bring back additional information for Council to discuss. Council Member Sayles stated he would like to increase public information and community engagement. Sayles mentioned he would like to see a coordinated effort to get city information out. Mr. Pyrzenski recommended hiring someone to take on that role along with other administrative duties. Council Member Folk mentioned he would like to see a coordinated plan for annexation. Mr. Pyrzenski suggested he work with Rob on a plan for annexation.

Economic Development

Mr. Pyrzenski mentioned he would like to move Environment Management, Building Inspections, and Code Enforcement to the old fire department on Ridge Avenue. Mr. Pyrzenski mentioned he would also like to incorporate a fire department training room on the second floor. Council agreed that was a very positive plan to move the department.

Mr. Pyrzenski recommended the City create their own Economic Development/Community Development Department with its own director and separately have the Main Street Director which coordinates the DDA and downtown development. After discussion, Council agreed that was the right move and having someone market the economic development for areas outside of the downtown area.

Land Development Code, Zoning & Code

Pete recommended updating the City's Land Development Code and address the multiple zoning classifications. Mr. Pyrzenski reviewed the zoning maps with Council and suggested narrowing down the number of zoning classes. It was also suggested to move forward with putting a moratorium on new residential construction until the issues were addressed. Updating the Land Development Code and Zoning Map was established as a priority for 2018.

Mr. Pyrzenski also suggested the city consider establishing guidelines for upkeep of mobile home parks and suggested creating design standards for new development in Tifton. Mayor Smith mentioned these various mobile home parks are not contributing to the City's tax base and negatively affecting the neighborhoods around them.

Lastly, Council reviewed and discussed the proposed map of the Matt Wilson Redevelopment Area. Mayor Smith suggested scaling down the area to the city limits to encourage annexation.

Discussion of City Retirement

City Manager Pete Pyrzenski recommended to the Council to transfer the City's Retirement from Allen, Mooney, and Barnes to Georgia Municipal Association. Mr. Pyrzenski mentioned in his opinion, moving to GMA would be the best move overall for the City and the employees. Council reviewed the handouts provided by staff which compared the retirement options. Vice Mayor Ehlers suggesting going with GMA because they have the knowledgeable staff to effectively oversee the City's retirement assets, investments, and plan. Council Member Folk mentioned he keeps going back and forth, and really has not determined the best option for the City. Mr. Folk mentioned the cost for GMA to manage the plan is less than AMB, but the city's contributions will not change in reality. The handouts provided showed by switching to GMA the city would save an estimated \$100,000.00 per year. The handouts also showed that over the past ten years the city's return of investment was 3.8% and GMA's return was at 7.5%. Council briefly discussed and would like to move forward and bring the vote before Council as quickly as possible.

Service Delivery Overview

Mr. Pyrzenski provided a summary of the in-depth review of the County's budget, audits, and other documents used in preparation of gathering data to ensure tax equity. Mr. Pyrzenski mentioned Tift County's budget is overestimated by approximately 1.8 million dollars, and moving items to a Special Tax District should decrease the City taxes by 1.5 mills. The City Manager recommended addressing the following tax inequity issues discovered: Development Support Services Department should be moved to the special tax district; EMS salaries of approximately 7 people need to be transferred to the special tax district; Terminate the mosquito control agreement and move the expense to the special tax district; County Light District removed from the County's general fund and moved to the special tax district; and Address funding for the Library and Airport since the City and County both provide funding for these operations. Moving the recommended items from the County's General Fund to the Special Tax District totals an estimated \$1.5 million.

Water service was briefly discussed, but the Council suggested equalizing water rates were not going to be used in negotiating, but the city will consider establishing a rate schedule based on cost of delivery. The City Manager did not recommend making any changes to sewer rates. Funding for the Jail was briefly discussed. Mr. Pyrzenski felt the city was liable for the city's prisoners housed at Tift County Jail and would be addressed through the inmate agreement. The Council thanked Mr. Pyrzenski and staff for preparing the information and thought this was a very good start for entering service delivery discussions with the County.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned.

Mayor Julie Smith

Jessica Jones, City Clerk