Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, December 6, 2011, at 7:36 p.m., Mayor pro tempore Tibby DeJulio presiding.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

City Management

1. General Government Services Contracts Update

City Manager John McDonough stated several months ago Council approved a task order for Jacobs Engineering for the Hammond Park gymnastics program. The task order went through legal review by Jacobs Engineering and they made a determination that this was a service they could not provide. Staff recommends removing from the previous task order the administrative oversight that was to be provided at a rate of 4.5% of the total participant fees paid out to the part time instructors.

Regarding the municipal court contract, Jane Gaguski was hired several months ago as the Municipal Court Clerk. She was tasked to evaluate the court staffing levels and caseloads. A memo included in the agenda package outlines for neighboring jurisdictions the volume of court cases, their current staffing levels, and the average case age. The average case age in Sandy Springs is higher than some of the other jurisdictions. The department does not have the staffing required to quickly dispose of the cases. In order to address that issue and provide a higher level of customer satisfaction, it is staff's recommendation to add three FTE's for the duration of this fiscal year, which would end June 30, 2012. In 2012, during the budget process, the additional staffing will be reviewed to see how it impacts the budget numbers. The average number of cases per clerk in the Sandy Springs court is significantly higher than in other courts. A Sandy Springs clerk handles on average about 3,651 cases versus a clerk in the Johns Creek court that handles approximately 2,000. He recommends that at the next regular meeting Council approve an increase in the task order for the remainder of this fiscal year in the amount of $138,746.

Councilmember Dianne Fries asked if the addition of employees will decrease the ninety day case age.

City Manager McDonough stated the intent is to level the case load and reduce the number of cases per clerk, which would then in turn reduce the average age of the cases.

Councilmember John Paulson asked if there is a target number for the average age of a case.

City Manager McDonough stated staff's target is thirty to forty-five days.

Mayor pro tempore Tibby DeJulio asked if the City having the backlog of cases presents a legal liability to the City.

City Attorney Wendell Willard stated the backlog of cases increases the probability of mistakes being made by the clerks due to the pressure they are under in processing this many cases. The number of caseloads is not a liability, but the end product may present problems.

Mayor pro tempore DeJulio asked if management did not anticipate the workload for court when it was originally staffed.

City Manager McDonough stated until the City began operating, it was difficult to make that assessment. He then moved to a recommendation for the financial services contract, in which services are provided by Severn Trent. Since the previous Finance Director's departure, Karen Ellis has been serving as the interim Finance Director. Ms. Ellis was initially hired to provide transitional assistance when Severn

Trent first became a contractor for the City. Ms. Ellis has been providing leadership and guidance to the Finance Department. She was offered a full time position with the City, which she has accepted. The cost for the support that was provided to the City was $6,635 per month since August 5, 2011, for a total of $33,175.

Councilmember Paulson stated some items discussed this spring were the rebidding of the contracts, the potential savings, and a mid-year review.

City Manager McDonough stated staff plans on presenting the mid-year review to Council at a Work Session in January, 2012.

2. Lease Agreement for Liquid Propane Fueling Station

City Attorney Wendell Willard stated this is a proposed lease that would be between the City and B.R.E.I. Sandy Springs LP. The property is located north of Abernathy Road at the storage center. On the north side of the property the City Police Department plans on storing propane tanks that will be used for the City police vehicles equipped for the use of propane. This is an attractive lease for the City and would be on a year-to-year basis.

City Manager John McDonough stated ultimately the City will be looking to have its own location for the propane fueling station.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny stated to the north of the property the area is commercially zoned. To the west of the property is a residential area. She asked if this type of use for the property is allowable due to the fact it is potentially hazardous.

City Manager McDonough stated this should not be viewed as a hazardous use. The tanks are about the size of propane tanks that are located on a residential property. The tanks will be above ground and placed on a concrete platform that will have bollards around it to prevent people from running into it.

Police Chief Terry Sult stated the propane tank is similar to what one would see if you went to a gas station to refill a home grill tank.

City Manager McDonough stated using the propane is part of the City's sustainability effort. The City plans on converting approximately thirty vehicles to the new technology. This will save the City in excess of $1 per gallon compared to the cost of regular gasoline.

There was a consensus of Council to move this item to the next Regular meeting agenda.

Public Works

1. Transportation Investment Act of 2010 Summary Briefing

City Manager John McDonough stated this is a presentation he requested. It was presented at the Sandy Springs Perimeter Chamber of Commerce meeting a couple of weeks ago. More should be known about the Transportation Investment Act and how it impacts Sandy Springs before the Chamber endorses the program. Kristen Wescott from the Public Works Department created the presentation. The Board did ultimately decide to support the passage of the transportation sales tax.

Councilmember Gabriel Sterling asked if this presentation is on the City website.

City Manager McDonough stated the presentation will be placed on the web, but he wanted it to be presented to Council first.

Transportation Planning Staff Member Kristen Wescott stated the Transportation Investment Act (TIA) is being referred to as a TSPLOST, or Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, which is a regional tax. The bill that initiated the TSPLOST included reviewing MARTA's transit governance Commission and the coordination of human and rural services transportation. Sandy Springs is part of the Atlanta Regional Roundtable. In October, the Atlanta Regional Roundtable unanimously approved the constrained project list for the Atlanta region. The sales tax referendum is scheduled for vote on July 31, 2012. She attended a legislative breakfast at the Atlanta Regional Commission, which included a panel of both local and State representatives. The project revenue is now $8.468 billion. This includes eighty-five percent for the regional list and then fifteen percent that will allocated to the different cities and counties. The estimated amount Sandy Springs will receive is $1.8 million per year totalling approximately $18 million for the ten year period. The ten year period is scheduled to begin in January 2013. A major project in Sandy Springs is Hammond Drive with an amount of $10 million to be paid by the TIA and to include additional funds and a local match. The two projects for the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) are the GA400 interchange at I-285 and the collector/distributor (C/D) lanes on GA400 between Spalding Drive and I-285.

Councilmember Sterling asked if the sound barrier walls will be installed along those properties next to GA400 by the C/D lanes, if the TIA is passed. He asked if staff can ask GDOT if the barriers will be part of the project.

Ms. Wescott stated she will have staff check on the installation of the sound barriers. MARTA has money available to consider extending the rail line from the North Springs MARTA station to Holcomb Bridge Road, which would include a stop location in the vicinity of Northridge. What is envisioned at Hammond Drive is widening, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and connections to Hammond Park. An example of the C/D lanes is the section of GA400 and I-285 down to the Glenridge Connector. The C/D lane project is north of I-285 and will help eliminate traffic in that area. The C/D lanes and the GA400 and I-285 interchange are connected in that area. GDOT expects to have an environmental impact statement by the beginning of next year. GDOT is currently evaluating four different designs. There is not an improved design for Roswell Road at this point, because GDOT first has to go through the draft environmental impact process.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny stated the City has been told for many years that the Roswell Road Bridge will be widened. GDOT stated that due to the proximity of Roswell Road to the intersection of GA400 and I-285, the projects have to be designed together. She would be very concerned if the Roswell Road interchange is not a part of the $450 million project.

Ms. Wescott stated Revive I-285 is looking at the entire area from I-75 to I-85. These concepts include improvements to Roswell Road as well. The final project is the MARTA north line extension. MARTA is beginning an alternative analysis, which is an environmental evaluation to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) has a project called the regional mobility call center. This project was created from the TIA and deals with transportation for disabled, elderly, and others. Adjacent jurisdictions have projects that are close to the City borders. On Ashford Dunwoody Road at Perimeter Center there is an ITS project that includes streets in Sandy Springs. The City of Dunwoody wants to improve Mount Vernon Road. The City of Roswell has money set aside for the gateway corridor, which includes the bicycle pedestrian bridge over the Chattahoochee River, and will extend into the City of Roswell.

Councilmember John Paulson asked if staff could update him on the MARTA north line extension project as it progresses. He is interested in knowing if the new plans are similar to the old plans he saw fifteen years ago.

Ms. Wescott stated MARTA and their consultant have asked Sandy Springs to participate in the analysis.

Councilmember Dianne Fries asked if MARTA is discussing the north line extension before the TIA is approved.

Ms. Wescott stated in order to advance the program, MARTA is trying to leverage federal money. After a certain amount of time environmental clearances expire. Then the project has to be restarted where it left off and make sure everything is still in place. The alternatives analysis directed by the Federal Transit Administration allows the money set aside for the TIA to be leveraged to try to obtain federal transit money as well.

Councilmember Sterling asked about Roswell Road/State Route 9 and the corridor improvements and if that includes widening Alpharetta Highway to the north.

Ms. Wescott stated the widening of SR 9 would be from the Chattahoochee River to the north. Seven concepts are currently being evaluated.

Councilmember Chip Collins stated $10 million for Hammond Drive would come from the TIA. He asked if the remaining $23.5 million would come from the City coffers.

City Manager McDonough responded the remaining amount would come from other sources.

Councilmember Sterling stated Sandy Springs will receive $18 million overall from the fifteen percent share of the TSPLOST.

City Manager McDonough stated that money could be pledged for the Hammond Drive project.

Ms. Wescott stated the Hammond Drive project is on the regional transportation plan with matching funds. The final two projects include Atlanta's bus rapid transit project and the GRTA Express system. GRTA currently operates two express buses to the Perimeter and Sandy Springs area: GA400 from the City of Cumming to the North Springs station; and from I-20 at Panola Road to the Perimeter.

Councilmember Sterling asked where the buses drop off occupants.

Ms. Wescott stated one bus goes to the MARTA North Springs station and the bus from Panola Road drops off passengers at the medical center area. Originally there were two projects on the TIA unconstrained list. The City of Atlanta and the Buckhead Community Improvement District (BCID) have reached out to Sandy Springs staff and stated the operations will be from either the Dunwoody or Sandy Springs station to the Lindberg station. Some of the improvement money along Roswell Road and along Piedmont Road is included. The BCID is looking at two different options, one being to use the TSPLOST money the other to use the TSPLOST money and leverage it through the FTA. By doing that, Sandy Springs can leverage money on improvements the City needs along that part of the corridor in Sandy Springs.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny asked if the buses will progress to Hammond Drive.

Ms. Wescott responded yes, or they will extend to Abernathy Road.

Councilmember Sterling stated the City of Atlanta had a huge unconstrained list, which listed many projects. A group of people had to negotiate through the total amount of money and choose which projects the money should go to. In order for Sandy Springs to have GA400, I-285, and the C/D lanes completed, the money has to be shared.

Ms. Wescott stated throughout the North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation planning process staff worked closely with the North Fulton neighboring jurisdictions. The North Fulton and Sandy Springs projects all came out of that planning process.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Date Approved: December 20, 2011

Eva Galambos, Mayor

Michael Casey, City Clerk