

NOTES: WORKSHOP/RETREAT April 28, 2020

Mayor Sessions called the workshop to order at 3:30PM on Tuesday, April 28, 2020. Those attending in person were John Branigin, Monty Parks, and Spec Hosti. Also in attendance was Jan LeViner, Clerk of Council. Those attending via Zoom were Shirley Sessions, Barry Brown, Nancy DeVetter and Jay Burke. Also attending via Zoom were Bubba Hughes, City Attorney and Shawn Gillen, City Manager.

Mayor Sessions welcomed everyone and gave a brief synopsis of the agenda for the City Council Agenda.

Dr. Gillen: City Facilities

• **City Offices**

- What constitutes with Phase I and opening
- Chatham County – May 13th will begin Phase I of opening city offices
 - 13 May – open for 4 hours a day, 10AM – 2PM
 - Water bills – in paying with cash may come in
 - Parking decals – may come in
 - Meet with others – appointment only
 - Someone at front door – only one person in building at a time
 - TIFD will disinfect City Hall prior to opening
 - TIFD will conduct training on how to wear a mask and gloves
 - Expanding into Phase II – not sure when that will start
- Phase II
 - Not sure when that will happen

Discussion

- Mayor Sessions: If people come City Hall, what is the process
 - Dr. Gillen: Alice will be stationed outside City Hall and will have a form for people to complete prior to coming in City Hall
- Mayor pro tem Brown: Can we take temps of those coming to City Hall.
 - Dr. Gillen: not sure but will find out
- Mr. Parks: happy to wait until May 13th to open is good. Like the form.
- Ms. DeVetter: has some concerns with opening. Can it roll-back opening
- Mr. Parks:
 - Tremendous responsibility moving forward
 - Shelter in place – end Thursday

- DNR – expires Thursday
- People have disregard of barricades
- Parking in neighborhood is not good. Parking for visitors should be in controlled areas
- Strong responsibility to Police, DPW, Parking and Staff
- Meet weekly for the next month

Mayor Sessions: Spoke with Michael as to support from GaSP and DNR for weekend. Confirmed and governor not taking away for the weekend.

Mr. Hughes:

- The City does not have a choice – but with opening city hall we can do what we want. The county has determined they want admin offices open May 13.
 - Dr. Gillen: Those who can work from home will continue to work from home
 - Mayor Sessions: by working with the Chatham County, May 14th for soft opening shows unity.

Parks/Playgrounds

- Dr. Gillen:
 - Signs have been taken down.
 - Playgrounds: have been kept locked.
- Mayor Sessions: YMCA waiting to open
- Dr. Gillen
 - Recommending keeping playgrounds closed and follow YMCA
 - Mr. Hosti: keep playgrounds closed
 - Ms. DeVetter: keep the playgrounds closed through May 13th

Restrooms

- Dr. Gillen
 - Opened for the weekend and were closed on Monday March 27th.
 - Open only for weekends
 - Mayor Sessions: agreed to open for weekends
 - Mr. Branigin: recognized there will be lots of people on the Island as STVR's will be opening. Leave open
 - Mr. Parks: asked Dr. Gillen if doable – confirmed
 - Ms. DeVetter: confirmed the bathrooms will be open and asked if DPW will have special protocol. Dr. Gillen confirmed.

Parking Services/beach crossovers/parking lots

- Mayor Sessions: is it possible to add to electronic signs – recommending parking services app. This will help staff as they won't have to empty machines.
- Dr. Gillen: to reach out to Chief Bryson as he has the number
- Dr. Gillen: 6700 vehicles in April 26th weekend
 - Recommending opening parking lots, every other parking space
 - Mayor pro tem Brown: Plan – open 16 and 18 street – close every other parking space, give everyone one way on and off beach via crossovers. The challenge will be to have staff there.
 - Dr. Gillen: hard to maintain one way off and on beach. Not enough staff to man
 - Mr. Hosti: not our job to enforce social distancing. Need to open all the crossovers and not block off parking spaces. People need to be responsible.
 - Dr. Gillen: parking lot not an issue.
 - Mayor Sessions: open some or all crossovers. 14-18th are the busiest crossovers
 - Mayor pro tem Brown: still wants to open
 - Mr. Branigin: agrees with Mr. Hosti. Social distancing is responsible for themselves. All crossovers and parking spaces should be open. Crossovers being one way will not be adhered to.
 - Mr. Parks: take down all barricades and open strand parking lot. Not 14th Street. Will go with every other parking spaces. Not possible to make crossovers one way.
 - Mr. Burke: slow down and have every other parking space. Not open all crossovers. Be smart – slow down – need enforcement
 - Mr. Branigin: More comfortable every other parking space but not going on at Publix, etc. Take down all crossovers. The Governor has put us in this spot and he doesn't have sympathy for him. DNR is not writing tickets. GaSP is not writing tickets as well.
 - Mayor Sessions: not sure what the Governor told DNR and GaSP have been told. Good that our officers were present. Whatever we decide regarding parking and crossovers and must convey to DNR and GaSP decisions by the City regarding enforcement

- Ms. DeVetter: City Marshal program?? Concentrating access to the beach. Partially opening parking lots and put the marshal there for enforcement.
- Dr. Gillen: city marshal are bringing on two people, animal control, who will be worked in for enforcement.
- Mr. Parks: all crossovers open, Alley 3 should be open as well as the fishing pier.
- Mayor Sessions: Alley 3 – one responsible owner that uses Alley 3 for kayaks, and we need to help that owner.
- Mr. Hosti: open Alley 3 confirmed as long as used responsibility
- Mr. Parks: fishing pier to be open
- Ms. DeVetter: open parking lots, not Alley 3.
- Mr. Burke: Keep Alley 3 and Fishing pier closed. Open all crossovers
- Mayor Sessions: some in favor or open in concentration area 14 -18
- Dr. Gillen: 14 and 18 – open crossovers, open Strand parking lot and flexibility to open 16th and 16th lots if needed.
- Mr. Parks: what about NB parking lot?
- Dr. Gillen: not in favor of NB parking lot dues to staffing
- Mr. Parks: need to take down NB signs at crossovers
- Mr. Branigin: More disagreement regarding crossovers. Need to separate the two.
- Mr. Hosti: recommended to open all crossovers.
 - John, Monty, and Spec,
 - Nancy, Jay and Barry – against
- Mr. Hughes reminded mayor and council they designated Manager to move forward with his decisions. Manager would have the ability on what to open, crossovers and parking lots.
- Mr. Parks: Residential crossovers, 5-14, why can't they be open
- Dr. Gillen: will use his judgement. Will monitor and if it gets busy he will open
- Mr. Parks: handed over to Shawn and glad he has heard the discussions
- Dr. Gillen: staff meeting in the morning and will report back to mayor and council after speaking with Chief. Maybe have a rolling open
- Mr. Branigin: reminder if open 16 parking lot, Fanny's were allotted two parking spaces for to-go.

- Mayor Sessions: consensus to let Shawn and Chief make the decisions regarding opening of parking lot and crossovers.
- Mr. Hughes: Shawn, Pete and Chief will know immediately when parking is filling.

Meetings

- Mr. Parks: need to have weekly meetings

Assistance to Businesses

- Residents: waiving of late fees

Mr. Hughes

- No new Administrative Order
- Thursday is the last day of shelter in place
- Under the new order, May 1, it will not apply to those who are 65 and older
- Need to watch as the Governor can change
- Non-critical business can operate as of April 2nd order if they practice safeguards. Gift shops and tee shirt shops can operate but in minimal people
 - Mr. Branigin: allowing STVR's to open. Need to open campground.
 - Mr. Hughes: campground is policy matter and up to the City.
- Mayor pro tem Brown: both STVR's have agreed to follow the City wishes as to not take any new reservations and check-in.
- Mr. Branigin: Voluntary Agreement was through April 30th.
- Mayor Sessions: has spoken to some and they are not receiving calls.

Michelle Owens –Downtown Development and Main Street (presentation attached)

- Businesses need cash and customers
- Extend deadlines
- Discount fees
- Grant was received – businesses will be able to use to defer rent and utilities??
- What can the City do financially for the small businesses
- They are figuring out how to do their business plan
- Expanding by “buy Local”
- Main Street would purchase gift cards and sell at a discounted rate.
- Sand Dollar Program ???
- Ms. DeVetter: immediate needs
 - Repurpose the grant to assist in paying bills
 - Process for changing grant

- Limit to businesses who actually closed not those who stayed open
 - This could happen soon
 - This is through the DDA – expansion of what is in place
- If anyone has an investor, please let Michelle know and she will reach out to them
- Helpful if business could use facilities and hang banners without charge
 - Classes
 - They could eat at the local businesses
 - Spec: thanked Michelle for her presentation. Can the businesses put out tables

Mr. Parks: open **campground** as normal. Mr. Branigin agreed.

- Ms. DeVetter: support keeping campground closed.
- John, Monty, Spec want it opened.
- Dr. Gillen: move forward with opening campground on May 1. But do not take any new.
- Mr. Branigin: need to open as there are so many coming
- Mr. Parks: open. Jamey is operating good and safe.
- Mr. Hughes: confirms to open

Mayor Sessions: Non-profit

- Theater not opening prior to middle of May. No final solution due to social distancing
- YMCA is staying closed
- Marine Science Center – staying closed
- Lighthouse – not opening right now

Dr. Gillen: Movies in park?

- None scheduled. Do we need to bring back.
- Michelle to take to the BOD and decision.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00PM. Monty Parks made a motion to adjourn. Spec Hosti seconded. Vote was unanimous to adjourn, 6-0.

