

WORK SESSION

MARCH 26, 2019

The City Council of the City of Athens met in a Work Session on Tuesday, March 26, 2019, 8:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers of the City Hall Annex, 501 N. Pinkerton St, with the following members present, to-wit:

Monte Montgomery, Mayor  
Ed McCain, Mayor Pro Tem  
Aaron Smith  
Robert Gross  
Toni Clay

Elizabeth Borstad, City Manager  
Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary

others present: Thanasis Kombos, Buddy Hill, Audrey Sloan, Randy Williams, Katie Birk, and Mark Carroll;

constituting a quorum at which time the following proceedings were enacted, to-wit:

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Monte Montgomery.

DISCUSS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Elizabeth Borstad, City Manager, explained the item was requested prior to the joint meeting with Athens Economic Development Board of Directors. She stated this discussion would allow the City Council to discuss future development, how the City would like to develop, benefits that are provided to future developers who come into the City of Athens. She further stated the item will allow the City Council to discuss a wide variety of items related to development.

Mayor Montgomery stated during past discussions in had been the consensus of the City Council to catch up with the infrastructure on lands that are currently annexed from the East to the North and Council at that time wanted more emphasis on infrastructure south town.

There was discussion regarding possible areas for development and the cities limited infrastructure. Ms. Borstad stated staff would obtain the system map. City Council discussed the next possible growth areas. Mayor Montgomery stated Hwy. 31 towards Tyler is busy and there are utilities. He stated the next best place for an industrial park is out by the proposed airport.

Councilmember Gross stated north side close to Hwy 175 would be easier access

Councilmember McCain stated the Comprehensive Master Plan needs updating. He further stated the City needs a new master plan that would statistically show where to invest in the infrastructure.

Councilmember McCain stated he would like a new plan in place and start saving to put the infrastructure in place.

Councilmember McCain stated the need from the Council level to set the EDC's agenda and making the EDC aware that this is the agenda for the City. He stated he felt the EDC is not operating under the City Council's philosophies, and by setting the direction it will allow the EDC to know the agenda for the City and this is where the City wants the EDC to go. He stated the EDC and City Council's relationship needs recalibrated.

Councilmember Gross presented an Athens Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) 5 Year Review. He stated he is unhappy with the results.

Much discussion occurred regarding AEDC's 5 year review.

Councilmember Gross stated he has lost all confidence in the executive director.

Much discussion occurred regarding AEDC's budget and the resultant benefit to the city. The City Council also discussed incorporating AEDC's budget into infrastructure.

Mayor Montgomery stated he wanted to go on record as saying he will not be attending future AEDC meetings. He stated his presence appears to be disruptive and it makes the meeting nonproductive.

After much discussion City Council reached consensus on the following:

- City Manager to send letter or make contact with Lisa Denton, Executive Director and the AEDC Board President this week of the City Council's concern and what transpired during the work session and schedule a Joint City Council and AEDC Meeting
- Reset the relation between the City Council and AEDC and the City Council will set the direction of AEDC moving forward
- Inform AEDC that two (2) out of the five (5) councilmembers have lost confidence in the executive director and it is at a critical juncture
- Remind AEDC of the hierarchy
- City Manager to research other economic development corporations and how they operate, and how many employees other economic development corporations have
- Verify what other economic development corporations have in regards to acres developable or already developed for growth
- Address overall overhead budget of AEDC for Fiscal Year 2020 with a reduction in staff
- Set money aside for infrastructure for fifteen to twenty years
- EDC to pick up the \$15,000 to \$20,000 in tax rebates for retention

#### DISCUSS COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN AND UPDATE

It was the consensus of the City Council that the City Manager will issue a Request for Qualification to update the 1999 Comprehensive Plan during Fiscal Year 2020 budget.

#### ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS THE 8<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2019.

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Monte Montgomery, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary