

Minutes - Draft

PECS-Planning, Economic Development & Community Services Committee

Thursday, July 29, 2021

11:00 AM

Special Called Meeting

This meeting will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Simultaneous public access to the meeting will be available

(1) via live stream on DCTV's webpage,

(2) on DCTVChannel23.TV

Meeting Started At: 11:01AM

Attendance: Commissioners Johnson, Davis Johnson, Rader, Patrick, Bradshaw, Terry, Cochran-Johnson

Present 3 - Member Jeff Rader, Chairperson Larry Johnson, and Member Mereda Davis Johnson

I. STATUS UPDATE

DeKalb Chamber of Commerce

-presentation from DeKalb Chamber President and CEO Frankie Atwater

-Question JR: a comprehensive answer doesn't need to be provided now, but during the presentation you mentioned partnerships with other organizations. We are considering an intergovernmental agreement with Decide DeKalb. Please start thinking about what you would like to see in that IGA as it relates to division of labor that we ought to consider within the chamber as it relates to a suite of partnerships, and how that can be accessed in the IGA through the Chamber of Commerce and other partners. I would be interested in your input.

-Question LCJ: I would like to say that you play a vital role in the support of businesses here in DeKalb, and I look forward to working with you.

-LJ: we look forward to that collaboration and partnership with you

Planning & Sustainability - Permitting System

-Z Williams: we have continued to move forward from our last discussion. We have onboarded staff, continue to evaluate technology needs in the midyear budget to grow our capabilities. The most important note is that the CEO is leading the team for assessing and addressing issues in the permitting process. There will be a government response to ensure the issues are addressed. The fact that permitting has become overwhelmed is a testament to the work the County has done, because the County is desirable. This puts more pressure on our permitting process. Mr. Baker will highlight some of these points. A fuller presentation will come after that

-updates provided from Director Baker

-LJ: requests Director Baker receive reports from each commissioners as it relates to calls they have received on the permitting process from constituents

-LJ: requests the task force with the business community that was part of the decision making process, as well as biggest critics who can provide feedback, and create best practices

-LJ: requests a report be presented in September regarding the ongoing discussion on permitting system

-Question RP: if there was conversation with permit expeditors, they can provide insight on snags happening and provide insights.

II. DISCUSSION

Senior Centers State of Readiness

-presentation from Director Scott

-MDJ: Lou Walker received their accreditation, and I am so proud they received that. They are the only center in the County with that national recognition. We don't have a firm date of opening with the variant coming; is there a mechanism in place for us to know which seniors are healthy and vaccinated from those that are not?

-D Scott: there are wellness checks that staff has with the seniors, and we have mechanisms to gauge where we are. That is something that we're currently examining, and are looking at ways in which we can track when centers also sign in and enter the center

-LJ: Mr. Williams we do have ARP funds set aside. Are you looking at having filtered water fountains?

-Z Williams: yes sir we are and are reviewing ARP allocations throughout the County as a whole

-LJ: please bring a timeline back to OPS so that we can discuss

Economic Development

Invest Atlanta

-presentation from Dr. Eloisa Klementich - Invest Atlanta Economic Development President

-MDJ: thank you for such an informative presentation and thank you for sharing with DeKalb County. I may call if I have any questions after reviewing your presentation.

-Question JR: I appreciate the demonstration of the depth of Invest Atlanta's expertise in economic development, housing, workforce development, etc. With those abilities the organization can meet targeted needs, rather than rely on a few tools in a box. We have a similar dynamic in DeKalb as it relates to having a county economic development authority that may not have aligned objectives as it relates to tax relief that may undermine the tax base of its community. We have a similar dynamic in DeKalb as you do in parts of Fulton, as there is a county economic development authority that may not have aligned objectives when it comes to using tools such as tax relief; I have appreciated your well-tempered approach to that issue. In DeKalb there have been instances where on the east side of the City of Atlanta did not want a particular incentive, like market-rate multi-family housing, that Decide DeKalb then picked up those incentives, thereby undercutting the city's objectives. I would like to ensure we don't end up in cross-purposes in areas that we share jurisdictions. We are working on the relationship with Decide DeKalb to ensure we meet the overarching development goals of both the agency and the jurisdictions that serve its people. As we work on gentrification and housing issues, we need to review the tools that Invest Atlanta is using, including the Urban Residential Finance Authority, affordability preservation of homes as areas become more attractive. We need to study this model as it relates to balancing our program to meet these elements. How do you interact and consult with the Atlanta city council as your primary stakeholder, and how have they been involved in these programs?

-Dr. Klementich: it is a very close relationship. I make presentations of around 30 reports to CDHS and Finance every quarter. After my quarterly updates I update them on specific issues of the council's interest, such as the housing opportunity bond. I also ensure their constituents know what's going on in the city. Apart from that, I have a schedule of reports I submit to them. And I meet with each of them myself every 6 months.

-Question LCJ: thank you for this presentation. As it relates to Decide DeKalb, we're going to create a model that treats Decide DeKalb as a business. It was great to see your funding sources as well. Not only are you relying on revenue from the City of Atlanta. I look forward to discussions with Decide DeKalb's model. We have reached a point of a crossroad, and will have to look at their role in terms of funding to know what we need to do to compete.

-LJ: my goal in this is to make sure that we look at best practices across the region and the nation. We will be looking at agencies across the nation as part of our series in the committee.

III. AGENDA ITEM

Previously Heard Agenda Items:

- [2021-2369](#) Commission District(s): Districts 2 and 6
Resolution Conveying the Policy of the DeKalb County Governing Authority Concerning Property Tax Abatement for the Manor Druid Hills Apartment/Hotel/Medical Office Project in the City of Brookhaven
This agenda item was no official recommendation

-County Attorney Ernstes: commissioners pending on your agenda is a resolution that rejects a transaction that was previously being considered by Decide DeKalb, that is no longer being considered, as it has gone to the City of Brookhaven. The City of Brookhaven has approved the deal, and the validation has not been filed yet. The commissioner wants to direct the committee to direct me to revise the resolution that is currently pending and is no longer accurate, as it relates to the structure in Brookhaven. We can also talk to the Mayor of Brookhaven and interested parties in terms of the School District and the County. Because the development authority has already acted before that discussion occurred, that is the reason Commissioner Rader would like to keep this resolution on the agenda, and I can revise this resolution by the BOC meeting on Tuesday to come back to committee as you see fit.

-LJ: requests Attorney Ernstes to bring this to the BOC on Tuesday so that the commissioners can review

-V Ernstes: I may have this to you on Monday as soon as I can; we will have our outside council review as well

-JR: the only point I'd like to make is that my intention is not to move this to action on Tuesday; instead if the draft meets people's expectations as it relates to the deal, we would accept the substitute and defer that back to committee

-LJ: ok we will do that and bring it back to committee

Meeting Ended At: 12:19PM

MOTION was made by Mereda Davis Johnson, seconded by Larry Johnson, that this agenda item be adjourned meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Chairperson Johnson, and Member Davis Johnson

Not Present: 1 - Member Rader

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC
DeKalb