Minutes
City of Mableton
Planning Retreat
GMA Offices, 201 Pryor Street, Atlanta, GA 30303
Thursday, Friday, & Saturday, September 14, 15, & 16, 2023

Thursday, September 14

Present: Mayor Owens, Councilmembers Davis, Herndon, Jeffcoat, Ferguson, Auch and Oladapo (participated online).
Interim City Attorney Walker-Ashby and Interim City Clerk Susan Hiott
GMA Member Services Consultants: Michael McPherson and Terrell Jacobs
Quorum was present.

5:00PM - Welcome & Introductions - Michael Owens, Mayor, Mableton

Mayor Owens opened the meeting. There was a quorum. Councilmember Oladapo attended online.

5:30PM - Working Dinner / Team Building - Michael McPherson, Member Services Consultant and Terrell Jacobs

GMA Consultant Terrell Jacobs led in the team building exercise. Following the exercise, councilmembers discussed the importance of communication, having a goal, working together, and that prioritization was critical.

6:00PM - Planning Retreat Overview - Michael McPherson, Member Services Consultant

Mr. McPherson addressed that the role of facilitators was to keep the conversation focused and be the gate keepers and help the group reach consensus. Ground rules were addressed. Ground rules included trust, respect, and focusing on the talk about the future.

The Georgia Municipal Association power point presentation is available in the record.

6:30PM - Vision & Mission Exercise - Michael McPherson - Member Services Consultant

Mr. McPherson and Mr. Jacobs explained the difference between a vision, mission, and core values.
Vision: What the organization strives to be; a statement of a desirable future (aspirational).
Mission: What the organization does to move toward the vision (what, why, and how).
Values: What the organization stands for believes in; guiding principles for service delivery.

Mayor and Council expressed their thoughts while also sharing comments they had received from their constituents for a proposed draft of the vision of Mableton. GMA staff reiterated that a vision is for the future. It should be general and aspirational. The vision should be a short statement (16 words or less).

The mission statement provides a course for the future. The vision and mission statement are important to the overall strategic plan of an organization. The most important parts of the strategic plan include:

Vision: Setting a course for the future and then engaging to move the organization toward that vision.
Mission: Typically expressed as a statement that defines the purpose of the organization - Why does the City exist and who does the City serve?
Values: Guidelines and principles – what culture does the City want to create and how does the City want to act?

Mayor and Council looked at other City visions and began suggesting their own ideas for the vision, mission, and core values. The discussion was to continue the following day.

At 7:50PM the meeting adjourned.

Friday, September 15

Present: Mayor Owens, Councilmembers Davis, Herndon, Jeffcoat, Ferguson, Auch and Oladapo (online conference).
Interim City Attorney Walker-Ashby and Interim City Clerk Susan Hiott
Quorum was present.
Guest from public: Monica Evette DeLancy

8:30AM - Breakfast / Arrival

9:00AM - Vision & Mission - Michael McPherson, Member Services Consultant

Mayor Owens opened the meeting at 9:01 a.m. Quorum was present. Councilmember Oladapo attended online throughout the day.

Core Values: Mayor and Council each named their three main core values. The core values are the why behind the mission statement. Values reflect the way the City hires people, treats each person, and does business with its constituents. Core values named by Mayor and Council with some were same as other council members included: honesty, integrity, commitment, customer service, transparency, ethically, leadership, innovation, stewardship, unity, equity, inclusive, collaboration, professionalism, respect, openness, appreciative, excellence, and teamwork. There was additional discussion about "leadership".

Mayor and Council discussed, reviewed, and word smithed the different versions of the proposed mission statements from the previous day.

Mission draft after discussion: It is the mission of the City of Mableton to provide consistent, cost-effective services, while demonstrating transparency, openness, and responsiveness to the community; working to ensure the highest quality of life for the benefit of all.

Direction: The vision, mission, and core values are to be worked on and finalized for adoption.

Service Priorities - Emilia Walker-Ashby, Mableton Interim City Attorney

Interim City Attorney Walker-Ashby provided a power point presentation on service priorities.

Highlights of presentation (available in the record):

- City Charter Section 7.15 – *A period of time will be needed for an orderly transition of various-government functions from Cobb County to the City of Mableton. Accordingly, there shall be a transition period beginning on the effective date provided for in subsection (c) of Section 7.14 of this charter and ending at midnight on the last day of the twenty-fourth month following such date.*
- The transitional period ends June 30th of the 24th month pursuant to O.C.G.A. 36-31-2. *No later than July 1 following the expiration of such two-year period, the governing authority of the municipal corporation shall file a certification with the Department of Community Affairs stating whether the municipal corporation does or does not meet the standards for an active municipality under subsection (b) of Code Section 36-30-7.1.*
- Active Municipality Minimum Standards were addressed.
- Of the list, the Carl Vinson Institute suggested and listed Solid Waste Management, Enforcement of building, housing plumbing, and electrical codes and other similar codes, Planning and Zoning, and Recreational facilities. These are economically feasible for the City of Mableton.
- Direct Services versus indirect services – Direct services include Planning and Zoning, Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, Sanitation and Solid Waste.
- Indirect or support services include such functions as accounting, purchasing, human resources, risk management, and the like.
- Summary of expenditure estimates and indirect services & other operational costs were addressed.
- The Carl Vinson Feasibility Study estimated revenue was addressed.
- Hotel-Motel Tax Administration Relative to Occupation Tax Administration update was given.
    - Attorney's firm has started this process.
    - Forms created, letters and notification given, registration given, contacts made, billings and instructions conducted.
    - The payments go directly to City's bank account.
    - Hotels will be given a certificate.
    - Mayor and Council discussed if potential short-term rentals are collectable.
- Occupation Tax Administration was addressed. The renewals will be coming due December. If want to set up and put people on notice, license is for end of calendar year, but renewal could be due to the City. If do, must give the County a 30-day notice, and adopt legislation for the assessment. Will be a two-meeting process to allow two reads of the ordinance. If don't do by December, there will be confusion. Mayor Owens stated the City needs to get this done before end of year. This must be done, not an option. County uses gross receipts so best Mableton keeps same.
- Peachtree Corners' Administration budget was shown as an example. For indirect services, Smyrna's Finance and Human Resources Department budgets were shown as an example.

Additional Comments:

- Mayor and Council directed that Communications and Community Engagement be added as indirect services.
- For setting the staff salary, the size and location of the City should be considered.
- Mayor Owens announced the Google accounts were in process and emails should be set soon.

11:15AM - Break and 12:00 PM – Working Lunch
1:00PM - GMA Benefits Introductions - Randy Logan, GMA Deputy Director

Mr. Logan introduced the staff that were present to discuss each of the benefits and services.

1:15PM - Workers Compensation & Risk Management - Stan Deese, Director, Risk Management

Risk Management Director Stan Deese presented. The power point presentation is available in the record. Highlights of presentation:

- Information about the GMA Workers Compensation Self-Insurance Fund was provided.
- The GMA Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance Fund (GMA WCSIF) was established in 1982 under O.C.G.A. 34-9-150 et seq.
- It is regulated by the Georgia Department of Insurance.
- It is financially strong, and member owned.
- It is protected by excess of loss insurance agreements with National League of Cities Mutual Insurance Company and Safety National.
- It is largest provider of workers' compensation to Georgia municipalities.
- More than 480 members and 21,000 employees.

Mayor Owens expressed how grateful Mableton was for GMA's assistance and training. Discussion followed about the decisions that must be made for the City regarding workers' compensation. Mr. Deese stated it was tough to get insurance coverage in a new city. Since workers compensation, the frequency of people getting hurt has gone down, but the medical costs have gone up. The premiums have been stable. The safety programs have been beneficial in keeping incidents down. To obtain workers compensation from GMA, GMA will need the number of employees, salary, estimated payroll, and the City to pass a resolution.

Jan Hoard was also present. She handled the claims for GMA's Workers Compensation Self-Insurance Fund. She commented about the 247 claims reporting and efficient claims administration. Additional information was provided about the Safety & Loss Control Services.

Georgia Interlock Risk Management (GIRMA) Highlights:

- There is a different level of sovereign immunity for cities than counties.
- GIRMA provides a package policy that includes General Liability, Public Official's Liability, Automobile Liability and Physical Damage, Property, Boiler & Machinery, Animal Mortality, Crime (Fidelity), Inmate Medical, and Cyber (Network Security & Privacy Liability).
- GIRMA is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees.
- Contributions are based on individual loss experience and underwriting.
- Gallagher Bassett is the GIRMA Claims Third Party Administrator.
- Gallagher Bassett has a team of adjusters dedicated to GIRMA.
- Loss Control Services – LGRMS – was explained.
- The benefits of GIRMA were addressed.
- To start the coverage, the City must submit an application.

2:00PM - Retirement (Defined Benefits)- Marinetty Bienvenu, Director, Defined Benefits and Michelle Warner, Director, Field Services

Mr. Logan spoke about the importance of benefits for hiring and retaining employees. The Georgia Municipal Employee Benefit System (GMEBS) Retirement Fund offers retirement services.

Ms. Warner spoke about the types of retirement plans. The Defined Benefit is formula-based paid over the retiree's lifetime. Benefit is usually related to an employee's service and/or pay. The Defined Contribution plan is similar to the public sector 401 (k). The benefit is based on level of contribution age at entry, retirement age, and investment earnings (losses).

Retirement (Deferred & Defined Compensation) - Randy Briskin, Field Services Representative

Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution plans were explained further.

Marinetty Bienvenu spoke about the Defined Benefit Covered Services.

Life & Health - Denise Joyce, Senior Director of Operations

Denise Joyce provided an overview of Life & Health Programs.

- There are 182 participating employers.
- Medical Plan – Anthem, Inc.
- Pharmacy (RX) – Aeta, Inc
- Dental – Delta Dental
- Vision Plan – Anthem, Inc.
- Sample plans were given.
- Enrollment periods were explained.

Questions & Answers took place during the presentation.

Service Priorities Discussion Continued - Communications – Interim Attorney Walker-Ashby

Indirect Services Cont'd – Communications

Looked at Kennesaw and College Park departments and budget.
The council discussed ways to get communications out and let residents know what is going on.
Discussed DMOs.
Mayor and Council renamed position of Communications to Communications and Community Engagement.

Reviewed Direct Services Revenue and Mayor and Council discussed:

- Process for implementation of Zoning Ordinance, adopting the County's Ordinance, and hiring of Community Development Director.
- Importance of having a moratorium on zoning until an ordinance was in place.
- Need for software and projected costs.
- Need for a building for City Hall.

- Proposed type of sanitation program. Recommendation was made to have a standardizing service, monitored, and if a service was not performing, could have recourse.
- City would have oversight of sanitation program, but citizens have the right to choose their company. Implementing the sanitation program would be the easiest to do.

The meeting adjourned at 5:17 PM.

Saturday, September 16

Present: Mayor Owens, Councilmembers Davis, Herndon, Jeffcoat, Ferguson, Auch and Interim City Attorney Walker-Ashby and Interim City Clerk Susan Hiott and Financial Consultant Frank Milazi.
Quorum was present.
Guest present – Patricia Kamisa
Absent: Councilmember Oladapo

8:30AM - Breakfast / Arrival

Review of Vision and Mission Statements

Mr. McPhearson reviewed the proposed vision and mission statements. The mission statement was done. The vision statement was close. He encouraged the Council to keep discussing. The Mayor and Council should ratify at a meeting when finalized.

VISION: The City of Mableton will be a **(diverse or inclusive**) family-friendly and thriving community (**empowering or fostering or for**) a vibrant, safe, and sustainable future.

There was discussion about the words in parentheses. Discussion leaned toward diverse and fostering. Council agreed that "Leadership" was a core value.

MISSION: It is the mission of the City of Mableton to provide consistent, cost-effective services, while demonstrating transparency, openness, and responsiveness to the community; working to ensure the highest quality of life for the benefit of all.

Mr. McPherson commended the Mayor and Council for their cooperation and civility. Mr. McPherson explained how important it was for Mayors and Councils to let the professional staff do their jobs and not get in their way.

9:00AM - Budget & Fiscal Year - Frank Milazi, Mableton Financial Consultant

Mr. Milazi provided a power point presentation about the budget process. The presentation is available in the record.

Highlights included:

- A budget is a legal document that serves as a financial plan.
- The fiscal year must be determined. The budget is for 12 months.
- A plan listing proposed expenditures with a means of paying for them with anticipated revenues.

- The budget is the primary tool used by the City to guide the delivery of services and to communicate priorities to the public.
- Operating Budget and Capital Budget were explained. Capital Budget is for 5 + years.
- Laws, regulations, and principles about budgeting were addressed.
- There are requirements for advertising and conducting public hearings for local government budget adoption.
- Cities must use the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles; failure to report using GAAP will result in a qualified or adverse audit opinion and risk or loss of state and federal funding eligibility.
- Each fund requires its own financial accounting system.
- Accounting classifications and descriptions must follow the Uniform Chart of Accounts as required by state law.
- Balanced budgets shall be adopted for: General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Debt Obligation Funds, and Capital Projects Funds – project length.
- Municipalities are encouraged to adopt a budget for other funds:
- Enterprise Funds
    - Water/Sewer
    - Electric
    - Natural Gas
    - Storm Water
    - Solid Waste
    - Recreation and Parks Programs

- Charter Requirements are in Section 6.26 and Section 6.27. Property Tax is Section 6.10 and 6.11 Millage.
- Section 6.23 requires the City Council to set the fiscal year by ordinance.
- Section 6.30 of the Charter requires an annual independent audit of all city accounts, funds, and financial transactions by a certified public accountant selected by the City Council.
- Section 6.28 – Changes in Budget – Authorizes the city council by majority vote to make changes in the appropriations contained in the current operating budget at any regular meeting or special or emergency meeting.
- The City Manager is required per Section 2.30 (5) of the City Charter to prepare and submit the annual operating budget and capital budget.
- Budget formulation and cycle were addressed. It is a year-round cycle that involves the interaction of the Mayor and Council, staff, and the public to identify service needs, develop strategies to meet the needs, and to develop detailed revenue and expenditure plans to carry out the strategies.
- The Budget Cycle – Goal Setting – Revenue Projections and Data Analysis – Budget Development-Budget Adoption – Budget Implementation – Review and Audit – back to Goal Setting.
- The City should adopt financial policies.
- Budget Cycle was described.
- The importance of having goals and giving staff clear direction about goals and priorities.

Questions and discussion followed:

- There was discussion about having a contingency fund/plan (reserves) for such unforeseen items as catastrophic happenings (i.e., flood) or unexpected occurrences.

- Having a fund balance was important. Some cities require six months operating funds in fund balance.
- How to do the first budget during the transitional period was addressed. There definitely must be a preliminary budget for hiring staff, purchase of software, securing a building, etc.
- Need to authorize expenditures. It could be called a spending plan.
- The council agreed to have a spending plan with authorizations. The council discussed it was near time to hire a city manager and community development staff.
- Mayor Owens expressed the need to explain the actions needed for the set-up transition period that was causing some spending. Although small, there is a need to present it to the public to show the why behind the expenditure. The revenues are coming in and the current expenditures are minor in comparison. Some revenues have not normalized yet. It was hard to establish a true budget.
- There needs to be an initial road map for the transitional period. The budget (explanation) of where the City was needed to be created.
- Mayor Owens suggested adopting July 1st as budget year but do an interim budget until then. If call it a budget, will have to advertise, and do the notifications in the paper.
- Attorney Walker Ashby stated the City had to adopt a preliminary budget, don't have to call it a budget, can call it accounting and authorization. One of the issues was having service and staff and expenses such as software and equipment, salaries, benefits, insurance, risk management, etc. It is critical to know the Council authorizes the expenditure. The expenditures and cash flow are coming in to meet expenditures.
- After discussion, the direction was to do a spending plan – estimate expenses so have balanced spending up to June 30th.
- Good practices for adoption of a budget are to create a calendar of the budget process. Present reports on the spending plan. Be transparent about the budgeting process.
- The council discussed the workers' compensation expenditure as an example of an item needed in the spending plan.
- The spending plan could include the debt and will know more once all is put together.
- Mr. Jacob opined that the Mayor and Council need to hire/contract a City Manager. The City Manager is responsible to the Mayor and Council and keeps the Mayor and Council *out of the weeds.*
- Mr. McPherson also explained the importance of the City Manager.
- An experienced seasoned professional City Manager will help with the transition, hiring, and budgeting. A good city manager understands all departments. The City Manager could be a consultant, 1099 income.
- Mayor Owens explained how previously there was not any money to hire a City Manager, (zero everything) but now need to discuss since near bringing on the services. Collectively the Council have not taken the easy route but was doing what the residents wanted, being to not spend money until had to spend.
- Councilmembers Jeffcoat stated it was important to be smart and feasibly responsible, but it is best to hire a city manager onboard sooner than later, one for Mayor's protection, and they can bring on their community development director.
- Councilmember Herndon explained residents understand and want to spend money where it makes sense. Some residents had asked her where the city manager was.

Items already authorized, expenditures, and expected items and expenditures for the interim spending plan through June 30th should be given to Mr. Milazi. The Mayor and Council agreed how important it was to be transparent and present and authorize a spending plan.

For the next fiscal year July 1 budget (July 2024-June 30, 2025) at the minimum of three months before July 1st, should start the budget process.

There was a working lunch.

Service Priorities Discussion Continued - Emilia Walker-Ashby - Mableton City Attorney

Interim City Attorney continued the power point presentation about service priorities. She explained how the presentation was consistently amended to reflect the previous discussions. The discussions helped to form the scope and next path for legislation, priorities, and documents moving forward. She asked for another recourse and discussion and instruction following the presentation.

The final presentation is available in the record.

Councilmember Ferguson asked Ms. Walker-Ashby how many start-up cities she had been involved in, and she replied Mableton was the third. He asked if the way she attacked/planned the meetings and considerations for Mableton was also the way she worked with the other cities. She explained how she takes the legislation of the last six start-ups and tailored the City to what worked and didn't work and utilizes the preferences and information from the County. Mableton was the first City to not have influx of cash immediately from ad valorem and the first City to not have a transition team to assist. Also, Mableton was the first City incorporated in Cobb County.

Mayor Owens addressed how it was great to compare to those other start-up cities, but Mableton was truly unique. Not having ad valorum tax was a huge difference. He emphasized how different the City was compared to the other start-ups.

Councilmember Ferguson commended Ms. Walker-Ashby for a job well done. Everyone applauded Ms. Walker-Ashby.

Highlights of the continued presentation:
Indirect Services and Direct Services were reviewed again.
The estimated Direct Services Revenue was reviewed.

- Occupation Taxes – Direct - $1,310,257
- Building & Development Permits – Direct - $1,144,256
- Restricted Hotel-Motel Tax – Direct - $624,556
- Alcoholic Beverage Excise Direct - $372,040
- Municipal Court Fines – Direct - $7,366 – Noted Expenditure will exceed revenues.

Community Development – anticipated by the Feasibility Study:

- Building & Development Permits
- Occupation Taxes
- Alcohol Beverage Excise Tax

Ms. Walker-Ashby noted some cities have business license under Finance, but initially, the best strategy is to have business license under Community Development. Smyrna has business licenses under Community Development.

Staffing categories were named. Expenditures for the City of Smyrna were referenced. The revenues projected for Mableton exceed the proposed expenditure. She also showed the budget for Peachtree Corners, for which expenses were much more. However, the budget was not as detailed as Smyrna's budget. Peachtree Corners had contracted services shown.

Enterprise fund-based service is when cities provide services on a fee. Sanitation is not intended to generate substantial revenue but to operate the service efficiently and effectively. It gives the taxpayer the chance to choose their level of service.

Solid Waste – Per discussions, many Council do not want a single provider but want to regulate service but prefer to have vendors register with the city and get a licenses to operate. Residents can pick and choose their company. This would be easy to set up and not take that much time. The provider gives a fee to the City. The City can administer. If a provider does not provide effectively, could lose their ability to do sanitation in the City. This is like Cobb County's practice. There must be an agreement in place. The process would be the same for commercials but would have different regulations. Ideally, there would be an online reporting system such as *See Click Fix* for complaints and requests.

Mayor Owens commented about the process, issues, and challenges. He commented about Mableton having a recycling center. Mayor Owens would like to see Mableton have a recycling center in the future.

Municipal Court Discussion:

- The need for municipal court would handle violations such as code enforcement. Mayor Owens had a handout from Cobb County regarding the revenues from Community Development (Rezoning, Code Enforcement, Business Inspection, and other departments). There was discussion about appointing and contracting judges, hiring court staff and options for contracting and setting up of the municipal court.
- Councilmember Auch referenced Charter Section 4.10 of Charter that *there shall be a court to be known as the municipal Court of the City of Mableton* (Line 723*). Section 4.11* (Line 726) – *The municipal court shall be presided over by a chief judge.* City Clerk Hiott *added all judges shall be appointed by the city council ...* (Line 730*).*
- Attorney Walker-Ashby reminded when Court is set up, there will be an ordinance. She also noted Line 1158 of the Charter *that during such transition period, all provisions of this charter shall be effective as law, but not all provisions of this charter shall be implemented.*
- There was discussion about how some start-up cities start out with contractual labor and gradually transition to employees. Other revenue for cities could include local option sales taxes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – 12:32 PM

Councilmember Jeffcoat made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss real estate and legal matters. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion. The motion carried. Yeas: Davis, Jeffcoat, Auch, Herndon, Ferguson, Owens. Absent: Oladapo.

Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to close the Executive Session (1:17 PM). Councilmember Herndon seconded the motion. The motion passed. Yeas: Davis, Jeffcoat, Auch, Herndon, Ferguson, Owens Absent: Oladapo

Service Priorities Discussion Continued

Attorney Walker-Ashby showed the organization chart with the immediate hiring needs in red (City Clerk, City Manager, Community Development Director, Human Resources Director, Finance Consultant, Information Systems Director and Systems Admin and Communications & Community Engagement Director. She explained how as the City gets personnel and appropriate people in place; those positions will hire the other positions. She explained the process to add the documents and legal processes, adding items to the agenda, mayor approving agenda, and then taking items to a meeting. If the Council communicates to the City Attorney their priorities including those the residents want, she can implement the process to initiate the priority/need. GMA Consultant Terrell Jacobs reiterated the importance of asking the Mableton residents what their priorities and concerns are. He recommended to address those items and give the people the outcome they want in consideration of the budget and funds and what the City can afford.

Attorney Walker-Ashby explained the staffing chart noting when working on the proposed budget, include the hiring of these main people in red, and those hired will decide on the number of people the department will need. The next meeting will be implementing and moving forward with the priority items. As the City works toward the three services required legally (Community Development, Planning and Zoning, and Solid Waste), and the City would want to add other services, they can be added later. (The staffing chart is in the presentation of the record.)

Summary of Discussion – Priorities

1. Spending Plan balancing:
   a. Current obligations & Short-term needs
   b. Facility lease
   c. Admin, Community Development, Human Resource & IT Personnel
2. Occupation taxes, hotels and building/dev. permits and code enforcement (enforcement of building, housing, plumbing, and electrical codes, and other similar codes)
3. Planning and Zoning
4. Solid Waste

H/M Tax Destination Marketing Org. Overview - Michael Huening, Esq. of Fincher Denmark

Mr. Huening provided a power point presentation. Highlights of presentation:

- Hotel-Motel Tax Law is addressed in OCGA Title 48, Chapter 13, Article 3 (Paragraphs 50-56).
- The purpose of the tax is to impose and collect the tax to be used for general funding operations of the municipality and to promote tourism and conventions within the city limits.
- O.C.G.A. 48-13-51 (a)(1) – 1-3% 100% of HMT Revenue, non-restricted and proceeds can be used for any legal general fund purpose in the city.
- O.C.G.A. 48-13-51 (a) (3) -5% -
  - The City was doing the 5%.
  - 60% of Hotel Motel Tax Revenue, non-restricted, proceeds can be used for any legal general fund purpose in the city.

- 40% for Tourism, Conventions, Trade (TCT)
- Restricted In each fiscal year, at least 40% of HMT revenue must be used for Tourism, Conventions, Trade Shows (TCT)

- O.C.G.A. 48-13-51 (b) – 8%
  - To get the 8%, must have legislation approval by General Assembly (January-February 2024).
  - 37.50% Non-Restricted
  - Proceeds can be used for any legal general fund purpose in the city.
  - 43.75% Tourism, Conventions, Trade (TCT)
  - In each year, at least 43.75% of HMT revenue must be used for TCT.
  - 18.75% TPD
  - Restricted
  - In each fiscal year up to 18.75% of Hotel Motel Tax may be used for TPD, otherwise used for TCT.
- Defining TCT – Purpose
  - Means "Planning, conducting, or participating in programs of information and publicity designed to attract or advertise tourism, conventions, or trade shows.
  - Depending on the authorization paragraph, a percentage of revenue goes toward TCT restricted spending.
  - For questions on the appropriateness of expenditures, always ask the city attorney.
  - Expended by the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)
- How can a DMO use TCT restricted funds:
  - Community-wide tourism advertising
  - Social media and internet marketing campaigns
  - Radio and Television Commercials
  - Soliciting convention or trade show contracts
  - Supporting/operating a convention facility
  - Only in certain situations and under certain authorization paragraphs, consult attorney.
  - Always be sure to consult with the city attorney.
  - How can't the DMO use TCT funds:
  - Fireworks, musical performers, festivals, etc.
  - Not "programs of information and publicity" or an advertisement for an event, they are the event.
  - Always be sure to consult with your local attorney when uncertain.
- The presentation included DMO requirements, alternative purposes and recipients, examples of Tourism Product Developments.

Reporting Requirements:

- Within six (6) months of the end of the fiscal year, each jurisdiction imposing the Hotel Motel Tax is responsible for completing the Hotel Motel Tax Report.
- Mr. Huening stressed the importance of designating and making clear where the money is going. Council are stewards of the public funds, and the City must be used for the proper purpose.
- Prior to each fiscal year, a budget plan should be adopted specifying how the proceeds of the tax shall be expended, which includes a budget for expenditures from the DMO. (O.C.G.A. 48-13-51 (a)(9)(B).
- Audit verification with the amounts and percentages of funds expended or contractually committed for expenditure during the fiscal year.

- As a 501(c) (6) non-profit the DMO may also be required to submit a financial audit to the state.

Questions and discussion followed.

ADJOURNMENT
Councilmember Ach made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Councilmember Herndon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Councilmember Oladapo was not present.

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hiott
Susan Hiott
Interim City Clerk

Michael Ownens
Mayor

Approved: 10/26/2023