AGENDA SESSION
NOVEMBER 8, 2011
3:00 P.M.

Chairman Ladd called the meeting of the Agenda Session to order with Councilpersons Berz, Benson, Scott, Rico, Robinson and Gilbert present. Councilmen Murphy and McGary joined the meeting later. City Attorney Michael McMahan and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Johnny Feagans, Dan Johnson, Chief Parker, Larry Zehnder, Richard Beeland, Ron Swafford, Tony Sammons, Jim Templeton, Chief Kennedy, Jerry Stewart, Steve Leach, Mike Patrick, Lt. Carroll, John Bridger, Chief Dodd, Danny Thornton, Dennis Malone, Bill Payne, Lee Norris, Chief Maffett, and Gary Hilbert.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NOVEMBER 8, 2011

Mr. Johnson began with Ordinance 6(a) First Reading, appropriating $20,000 from the General Fund Contingency to the East Chattanooga Improvement, Inc. to be used for the continuation of the Weed and Seed Program.

Councilwoman Scott stated that she had heard of this organization, and they do good work, but she wanted to ask for more information concerning their benchmarks and how they know that their goals have been achieved and also something about their planning for next year.

Chairwoman Ladd noted that Mr. Moreland was present and asked if the committee wanted to hear from him now or after the meeting? Mr. Johnson stated that either way was okay with him.

Councilman Benson stated that the Council had already received what Councilwoman Scott was asking for—that it was ten pages long, and they got it a week ago.

Councilwoman Scott indicated that she was thinking in terms of the Budget, wanting to know if this was a request for next year? She stated that if we had already appropriated it in the Budget, why were they coming now?

Mr. Johnson explained that this was not a change in the Budget; that it was for continuing this Agency; that they did not apply last year.

Councilwoman Scott wanted to know if this was an application that came in after the other non-profits came in? She stated that she had a problem with this; that we went through a very extensive Budget process concerning requests for funding; that there was a deadline and a vetting process, and she was wondering if we were setting a precedent by accepting a request now rather than during the regular time.
Mr. Moreland thanked the Council for this opportunity and explained the reason he was here now; that the East Chattanooga area is a Weed and Seed area, which is a federal initiative; that they had a five-year program and the Justice Department cut a lot of programs and this program was cut throughout the United States; that they tried to identify partners last year, and the program was completely cut, which left them short. He was asking that the City help them identify long time partners; that it would be crazy to let this program fall by the wayside after so much work and effort had been put into it.

Chairman Ladd asked Mr. Moreland to talk about the program and who they served.

Mr. Moreland explained that they worked in five areas—that Law Enforcement was one and Health was another, and they focused on items where people can help themselves—like obesity and diabetes. Economic Development was another area, and he noted they were having problems with housing and were working with landlord issues. Another strong component is Youth—there is a major issue with young people, and they worked with the schools in an effort to help young people make better choices and to stay in school. He noted that police stats would show that some of the burglaries are crimes committed by young kids who should be in school. He again noted that there were five areas they concentrated on.

Councilman Gilbert stated that Mr. Moreland was being modest, mentioning the gang situation where young men were killing each other; that some young men had gotten together and sat down with gang members, trying to smooth out things that could happen. He stated that Mr. Moreland had been here before and showed us pictures of duplexes that had become single-family residences; that in this area, crime is less than years before; that criminals know this is a Weed and Seed area, and they could be looking at federal time and 80% would go to jail rather than just getting a slap on the wrist. He stated that this program works, and he wished it could be in other neighborhoods; that he would hope we could look at all the “hot” spots and see what we can do to curb this activity. He went on to say that Mr. Moreland is a retired guy; that he retired from Dupont, and he takes the time and effort to work with kids; that he does not get paid for this and that he cares about his community. He stated that he would definitely vote for this, and he wished the program was in more areas.

Councilman Murphy indicated he wished we could give them more; that the Federal Weed and Seed Program had been cut and what we could give them was not nearly enough as a Federal Grant would be. He asked if they could not match this money that would be allocated by the Council, noting that it was far better to spend money at this end; that last summer things were good and this year it had “swung” back differently; that a majority of the homicides were in his and Councilman McGary’s districts; that a vast majority of the time crimes were in his district. He stated that he would be “racing” Councilman McGary to make a motion to approve this.
Councilwoman Robinson stated that she had a couple of questions. She asked if the Weed and Seed Program came and applied for money in the regular Budget cycle? Mr. Moreland responded that this program was cut completely by the Federal government. She asked if there was a way to match this? Mr. Moreland explained that they were in the process of identifying longtime partners and this City support would make it easier to attract businesses to help. She wanted to know if they secured funding if they were a tax exempt 501.c3 and was told “yes”. She stated that she did not remember seeing anything in the Budget for this. Mr. Moreland explained that they turned this information in when they made the request. Chairman Ladd confirmed that the Council received a copy of this.

Councilman McGary thanked Mr. Moreland and asked, other than a financial gift, how we could better serve the Weed and Seed Program? Mr. Moreland responded that he appreciated this; that they were not an organization that tried to raise a lot of money; that by partnering they were able to make the greatest impact with the least amount of money; that oftentimes kids just need help with homework and by people volunteering, this would save money; that by asking questions like Councilman McGary had just asked was helping, stating that he hoped Councilman McGary could help, and that he appreciated this.

Councilman Benson stated that when he first heard about this program, he was skeptical, but he had read the reports, and he was amazed, and it was due to Mr. Moreland’s leadership; that the last time we allocated something to Weed and Seed, a woman called him and asked if we were giving $50,000 to just cut weeds. He asked Mr. Moreland to explain the nature of the program for the press—what Weed and Seed means? Mr. Moreland responded that it was a two-part component—that they “weeded” out elements that they did not want and replaced them with good elements that they did want—likening this to a garden. He stated that if you did not “weed” a garden, it would become all weeds; that he appreciated the Council giving him a hearing, measuring progress, and talking about crime stats; that he was not happy that the majority of crimes was in their area; that they were not happy with the shootings; that we need to look at what we are facing and get our hands on this. He stated that right now it would be hard to get people to make an investment in Chattanooga—that if people watched the evening news, they would take their money some place else; that he was not proud when we were compared to other cities with crime. He went on to say that they operated with volunteers; that it was a privilege to give back; that when he retired it was his intention to go fishing but then he would see a kid that just needed an opportunity to make someone proud; that he knew there was a parents’ problem; that he would say “somebody ought to do something” and then he looked in the mirror and that “somebody” was him; that he lived in this city with grandkids, and he hoped to be a vehicle to make this a better place for them to live; that nowadays all kids have a gun, and we need to bring about a change.

Chairman Ladd stated that she would applaud him—that we learned a new way of applauding last week, and she raised her hands.
Mr. Johnson continued with the Agenda, stating that Resolutions (a) and (b) were discussed last week. Resolution (c) authorizes Change Order No. 1 to the agreement with Integrated Structural Services (ISS) to add items to the proposed irrigation system, for an increased amount of $14,560, for a revised amount not to exceed $147,637.35. Councilwoman Scott stated that she had a question last week about this, and she still needed an answer or clarification; that the original contract included the irrigation, with a “not to exceed” figure; now we had another $14,000 that was not in the original contract, and she wanted to know why?

Mr. Zehnder explained that not everything was in the original contract; that we were trying to do some of the things ourselves but decided that it made more sense for the contractor to do this.

Councilwoman Scott asked if this was known by all and if we put out an RFP? Mr. Zehnder responded that this is a creative project; that at the beginning, we did not have all the money; that we had a series of volunteer contractors and did it piecemeal and maybe missed some of the details; that we scrimped and saved on planning; that this was not the way he would prefer—that he wished we had had all the money at hand, but we had volunteers and were trying to do it on a shoe string.

Councilman McGary asked for an update on the state of Montague Park.

Mr. Zehnder stated that it was twofold; that they were proposing a rugby soccer field and were close to finishing; that the top soil was being put on today; that by next year we should be using it. The second thing was the development of a park, and we were presently in the process of a Lease Agreement with Mr. Henry; that he was inviting people to look at it this weekend—that people can get a first hand look.

Councilman Gilbert stated that this was an opportunity for people to see a beautiful park.

Mr. Zehnder added that a rugby field is the largest field you can build, and it will serve many different functions.

Resolution (d) authorizes the Director of General Services to enter into an agreement with JDH Company, Inc. for the re-roofing of the Chattanooga City Hall Annex Building in the amount of $93,225 and a contingency of $4,661.25, for a total amount not to exceed $97,886.25. Councilman McGary referenced the Council’s interest in green roofs and asked in the case of the Annex Building if we were re-patching something that was already there? Mr. Johnson stated that it was a regular roof. Mr. Thornton added that that building was constructed in the 1930’s and will not handle a green roof; that there is a lot of deterioration, and we are going back to the same roofing material. Mr. Johnson added that we were going with green roofs when feasible.
Resolution (e) authorizes the Personnel Administrator to amend the agreement with Morris & McDaniel, Inc. for the development and administration of exams for promotional testing for the positions of fire lieutenant and fire captain and to authorize an increase of the assessor travel expenses in the amount of $15,757.90, for a revised contract amount not to exceed $87,257.00.

Councilwoman Scott stated that she had had some calls from citizens wanting more details on this and asked for an explanation of $87,000 for travel. Chief Parker responded that this is a testing process that Personnel pays for where assessors travel to score for the next two years. Councilwoman Scott wanted to know if this is individualized for each municipality? Chief Parker responded that it is for testing for the positions of lieutenant and fire captain for a two-year period. She wanted to know if this was specialized for Chattanooga and was told “yes”. She wanted to know where the tests are administered and was told in East Brainerd—that there is a charge for the number of people. Chief Parker explained that it was a contracted price. She asked if this is standard for large municipalities? Chief Parker responded that he gone to Orlando, Florida—that they paid for his expenses; that the city got no deficit; that this is pretty much standard across the nation and is a small price to pay to avoid lawsuits; that this is a third party assessor, and it took him out of the process.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NOVEMBER 15, 2011

There is one Ordinance for First Reading, which Mr. Johnson assumed would be taken up in Legal and Legislative Committee next week. Councilman Murphy confirmed this.

Resolution 7(a) is a Public Works’ issue, and there will be more details next week.

Mr. Johnson proceeded to go over tonight’s purchases. The first was for the Police Dept. and the purchase of 30 rifles from Gulf States Distributors for $21,300. The second was an emergency purchase for Public Works to repair the sanitary sewer extension by Brown Brothers, Inc. for $43,550. Mr. Johnson stated that this may or may not be tonight. Councilwoman Scott asked if this related to sewer perforation in Red Bank and was told “yes”. She asked who the party was that was responsible for perforating the system? Mike Patrick explained that this is relocation of an easement; that we don’t know who is responsible; that the line is not useable, and it serves Erlanger North. Councilwoman Scott stated that it sounds like something planned. She asked if we got into the project and discovered that the line has to be removed right now? Mr. Patrick responded “that is what happened”.

The third purchase was for Human Services to ratify the payment of floor cleaning services from Reliable Building Solutions, Inc. for $3,500. The fourth was for Public Works and a blanket contract for traffic sign faces from Vulcan Signs for an estimated $20,000 annually. The fifth was a blanket contract for janitorial services for the Chattanooga Public Library from Metro Janitorial Service, Inc. in the amount of an estimated $11,520 annually. The last purchase was a blanket contract for infield dirt mix for Parks and Recreation from Southern Athletic Fields, Inc. for approximately $20,000 annually.
Chairman Ladd stated that there would be a meeting at 5:00 for the Council in the break room.

On motion of Councilman McGary, seconded by Councilman Rico, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as published.

This meeting was adjourned at 3:35 P.M.