

# Council Retreat – March 26, 2019

11:00AM – Carnegie Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room

## Topic 1: Opening Presentation – City Manager

**Description:** The City Manager will give an update on several topics around the city and also review action items from the 2018 Council Retreat.

**Desired Outcome:** To get everyone warmed up for a day of consensus building!

## Topic 2: Housing Study

**Description:** In December of 2018, Council authorized a contract with the Bleakly Advisory Group to conduct a Housing Study. The purpose of the study was to identify demands in the local housing market and how policies and economics are impacting the market. Members of the Bleakly Team will be present to present their findings.

**Desired Outcome:** To obtain a better understanding of the housing market and begin discussion of strategies presented within the study.

## Topic 3: City Owned Lots

**Description:** Council and staff have often discussed the status of city owned lots, but we have yet to take any action. The list of properties has become quite extensive and creates a large demand for maintenance and upkeep. Staff will present information on more than 80 lots.

**Desired Outcome:** To place each lot in one of three buckets: 1) To offer for sale via auction 2) To keep under city ownership 3) to transfer ownership to the NURA or other agency.

## Topic 4: Movie Permitting Process

**Description:** Movies, Movies, Movies! That seemed to be the trend in 2018. For several reasons Newnan has become one of the most attractive film locations in Georgia. Our permitting process was developed at a time of less demand and impact. Staff will present their findings and recommendations to improve our permitting process.

**Desired Outcome:** To obtain Council's direction on what to include, or not include, in the updated movie permitting process.

## Topic 5: Trolley Policy

**Description:** The trolley started operations in February of 2019 and is currently running a fixed route on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. We have had several requests to rent the trolley and also to buy advertisement space on the trolley. Without policy, staff was hesitant to proceed. Staff will present some ideas for policy direction.

**Desired Outcome:** To obtain Council's direction on rental policy, advertisement policy, and applicable rates.

## Topic 6: Park Projects

**Description:** In 2017, the City conducted feasibility studies regarding a youth sports complex that would host tournament play. Those studies found that the complex would require financial supplements and a good portion of the tourism impact would leak to nearby communities.

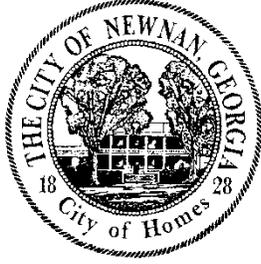
\$7,000,000 was allocated in 2019 SPLOST for 'Parks and Leisure Service Facilities'. Without the construction of the Youth Sports Complex, staff will present potential ideas for the allocated funds.

**Desired Outcome:** To obtain Council's direction on parks and leisure service projects for SPLOST 2019.

**Topic 7: Hotel-Motel Tax**

**Description:** Under the proposed legislation, the Hotel-Motel Tax will increase from 5% to 8%. Under the law, the City must spend at least 1.5% of the additional 3% via contract with a Destination Marketing Organization. Any remaining proceeds must be spent on Tourism Product Development. Staff will present information to help Council gain a better understanding of local funding options.

**Desired Outcome:** To obtain Council's general direction regarding the potential selection of a Destination Marketing Organization and identification of projects that fall under the definition of Tourism Product Development.



## 2019 Mayor and Council Retreat

Date: March 26, 2019

Agenda Item: City Owned Lots

Prepared by: Cleatus Phillips, City Manager

**Purpose:** To determine which 'city-owned' lots are in our best interest to keep, sale, or transfer to an entity for re-development purposes.

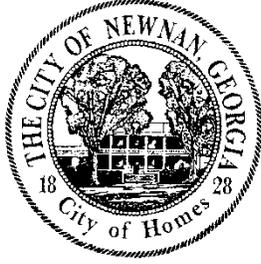
**Background:** The city currently owns more than 80 vacant lots. These properties were acquired in several ways, but primarily via tax sales. The definition of 'city owns' will vary per lot. We have title to some, but in others we only have interest via a lien.

Having some form of ownership in this number of lots create a tremendous amount of maintenance responsibility on staff, especially during the grass cutting season. While we may not have clear title, there is still an expectation from neighbors that the lots be maintained.

Some of the lots have potential for redevelopment purposes therefore Council may decide to keep these properties or transfer to the Newnan Urban Redevelopment Agency. For these lots, we will likely need to go through the process to obtain clear title.

For lots that Council may decide to sale, it would be staff's recommendation to sale these lots by an on-line auction process. For lots that we only have ownership interest via a lien, we would only be offering the sale of such lien. It would be the buyer's responsibility to obtain clear title.

During the retreat, staff will present a recommendation for each of the 80 plus lots. The lots will be presented in 1 of 3 buckets; to offer for sale, to keep, or to transfer. We will be asking Council to either confirm these recommendations or move each lot into another bucket.



## 2019 Mayor and Council Retreat

Date: March 26, 2019

Agenda Item: Housing Study

Prepared by: Cleatus Phillips, City Manager

**Purpose:** To hear a presentation from the Bleakly Advisory Group regarding the Housing Study commissioned by City Council in late 2018.

**Background:** After many discussions regarding housing options and opportunities, Council voted to contract with a qualified housing firm to gain a better understanding of the housing market in our community.

The study took a detailed dive into our current housing stock, ownership, market trends and an assortment of demographic data to determine what is driving our local market and what tools may be available to Council to assist with future housing decisions.

The study also included heavy public input. A public survey was crafted and released via social media and the level of participation was outstanding. The Bleakly Team also met with several stakeholders representing contractors, developers, real estate professionals, local companies, homeowner groups, and more. City staff did not participate in the stakeholder meetings in attempt to gain honest feedback from the groups.

During the retreat, the Bleakly Team will be in attendance to present the findings of this study for the first time. Discussion will follow regarding potential 'action items'.



## 2019 Mayor and Council Retreat

Date: March 26, 2019

Agenda Item: Movie Permitting

Prepared by: Hasco Craver, Asst City Manager

**Purpose:** To gain direction from City Council regarding the updating of our movie permitting process.

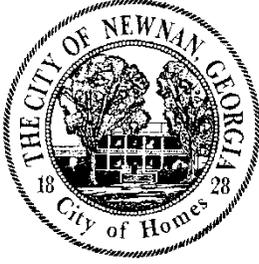
**Background:** Newnan has become a very desirable location for filming. After speaking with several individuals from the movie industry, Newnan is desirable due to our historic character serving as a great backdrop, our convenient location to Atlanta, and our reputation as being somewhat flexible. It was also stated by some that our permitting fees were low compared to other cities but fees alone will not drive the demand.

Due to the intense scale of the two movie productions earlier in 2019, Council voted to temporarily halt the issuance of movie permits in the 9 block area of downtown.

During the retreat, staff will lead a discussion that will identify Council's goals and concerns regarding the movie industry. Staff will present information on items such as:

- Council approval or staff approval. Should staff have authority to approve certain types of movie requests?
- What will be considered satisfactory communication with our business owners and what does that process look like? How involved is city staff? How valid can this process be?
- Do we want to have some level of schedule flexibility within the permitting process? Or do we want to keep hard and firm deadlines for all movie applications?
- We will look at processes from other communities. Will some of those work for us?
- Do we want to increase our fees? If so, to what level?

Upon finding consensus for these areas of discussion, staff will follow up quickly at a regularly scheduled Council meeting with an updated policy.



## 2019 Mayor and Council Retreat

Date: March 26, 2019

Agenda Item: Trolley Policy

Prepared by: Hasco Craver, Asst City Manager

**Purpose:** To gain direction from City Council regarding policy for renting or advertising on the trolley.

**Background:** Newnan started running the trolley on February 14, 2019. The trolley is operated on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays on a fixed-route from Downtown to Ashley Park. This is a one trolley operation. There is no charge to ride the trolley.

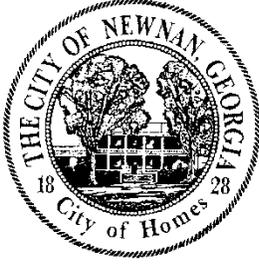
Ridership has been very steady and hasn't fallen off during the first month. Due to the popularity of the trolley, staff has been requested on several occasions to rent the trolley for private functions or to buy advertisement space on the trolley. Staff has not granted any of these requests due to the lack of policy.

During the retreat, staff will lead a discussion that will help Council answer questions such as:

- The first question to answer is 'does Council want to offer the trolley for rent'?
  - If so, do we rent to organizations, companies, and private individuals?
  - Should they provide or purchase insurance?
  - Do we allow food and beverage?
  - Do we require the use of our city driver?
  - Can it be driven outside of Newnan?
  - Should rental opportunities only be outside of the normal operating schedule?
  - What are the rental fees?
- The next question to answer is 'does Council want to offer advertising space on the trolley'?
  - If so, do we offer space on the exterior, interior, or both? (Staff would prefer interior only if council decides to offer advertising space!)
  - How do we pick who gets to advertise and who doesn't? First come first serve? Newnan companies only?
  - How long does the advertising stay on?
  - How large are the advertising opportunities?
  - What are the fees? Are there any fees?

We may also want to discuss some operational policy such as riders request to leave the fixed route, riders request to unload at spots along the route, back-up plans in case of mechanical failure, etc.

Upon finding consensus for these areas of discussion, staff will follow up at a regularly scheduled Council meeting with a proposed policy.



## 2019 Mayor and Council Retreat

Date: March 26, 2019

Agenda Item: Park Projects

Prepared by: Cleatus Phillips, City Manager

**Purpose:** Discussion of potential recreation projects utilizing the \$7,000,000 allocation in SPLOST 19.

**Background:** During the 2018 Retreat, Council was presented with a detailed report regarding the operations and feasibility of a Youth Sports Complex. This report yielded that the complex would require operational subsidies and much of the local impact would leak into nearby communities due to our current hotel occupancy rates. It was determined that we would put the project on hold and simply monitor the atmosphere surrounding these types of tourism sports complexes. While there is still a demand for tournament play in and around Newnan, staff has seen a few similar complexes struggle and at least one complex has forfeited their bond obligations to the local governing authority. Staff would like to suggest some other possible options for the \$7,000,000 allocation.

The following three options would all be eligible for SPLOST funding and also address specific recreations needs within our community.

### 1. New Park at Diplomat Parkway

This is a 10 acre parcel located on Diplomat Parkway behind Lowes. It was donated to the City as part of a rezoning condition. The site was analyzed as a potential location for an indoor sports complex, but it was determined the site was too small.

Potential uses inside the park include: pickle ball courts, sand volleyball courts, skateboard park, splash pad, climbing wall, playground, pavilions, and restrooms. The intent of this park would be to provide active space and not passive space as commonly seen in other city parks.

### 2. Park Improvements at CJ Smith

This is a current city park that includes a baseball field and playground. The entire baseball field, including concession and restroom, are in very poor condition. The park currently has minimal use. The playground is located up the hill a good distance from the baseball field which creates a separation concern for many parents. The LINC is being designed to run through this park, which will create new interest and activity in the park.

Potential uses in this park include: Re-purpose the baseball diamond into an all-purpose field that can be set up for baseball, softball, soccer, kickball, etc. Include activities that supplement the LINC such as bike, scooter, and skating options. New restrooms, pavilions, and playground are also recommended. The intent of this park design is also to be an active park.

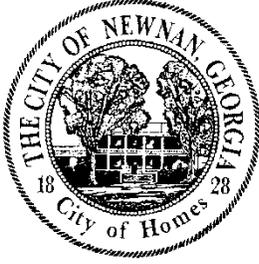
### 3. Baseball Field Improvements at Pickett Field

This is a current city baseball field that has seen little use over the past few years. The field is in decent condition at best. Council recently approved this field as a practice location for a local team.

What if Pickett Field became a Field of Dreams? Staff could envision the field becoming artificial turf, capable of being set-up for different ages of baseball and softball. The outfield could be set up for rectangle sports. All fencing, dugouts, seating, and concessions would be new to compliment the field. Seating would be few, but the areas surrounding the fence could be set-up with shade for viewers to bring their lawn chairs. This project could create some real interest in developing youth programs and become another anchor for Lynch Park.

Staff doesn't believe we can accomplish all three projects with the \$7,000,000 allocation, but all three certainly warrant discussion and potential action.

Conceptual plans and park ideas will be presented during the retreat. Staff will engage council in discussion to determine priority for these three potential parks.



## 2019 Mayor and Council Retreat

Date: March 26, 2019

Agenda Item: Proceeds of Hotel-Motel Tax

Prepared by: Cleatus Phillips, City Manager

**Purpose:** To begin discussion regarding utilization of the additional 3% hotel-motel tax proceeds.

**Background:** On March 11, 2019 Council voted to adopt an updated resolution asking our local legislative delegation to introduce and support legislation allowing the City of Newnan to increase our hotel-motel tax from 5% to 8%. As of this report, legislation was pending.

Under OCGA 48-13-51(b) at least 50% of the additional 3% tax must be expended for Tourism, Conventions, and Trade Shows via contract with a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). Any remaining amount can be used for Tourism Product Development (TPD).

During 2018, the 5% tax rate resulted in collections of \$717,630. Based on this amount, the additional 3% would generate revenues of \$430,578. There is one new hotel currently under construction, so this number should be slightly higher by the time the tax rate tax is effective.

The language of the statute gives council several options for selecting a DMO. If 100% of the additional tax proceeds are not designated to the DMO, then Council would also need to identify projects that qualify as TPD. TPD projects can be performed by the City. DMO and TPD options will be outlined in the presentation. It would be staff's recommendation that we work toward identifying our DMO partner and adopting the necessary ordinance with an effective date of January 1, 2020.

During the retreat, staff will present information from the Department of Community Affairs regarding expenditure of the tax proceeds. Information will also be presented about tourism. The intent is to engage Council in discussion that will lead to the identification of the DMO and the enhancement of tourism in our community.