



City of Roswell

38 Hill Street
Roswell, Georgia 30075

Meeting Minutes Mayor and City Council Special Called

Mayor Jere Wood
Council Member Nancy Diamond
Council Member Rich Dippolito
Council Member Kent Igleheart
Council Member Jerry Orlans
Council Member Betty Price
Council Member Becky Wynn

Monday, January 31, 2011

7:00 PM

City Hall

WELCOME

*Special Called Meeting of the Mayor and City Council, Monday, January 31, 2011,
8:52 p.m., Mayor Jere Wood presiding.*

Present: 7 - Mayor Jere Wood, Council Member Rich Dippolito, Council Member Kent Igleheart, Council Member Jerry Orlans, Council Member Betty Price, Council Member Becky Wynn, and Council Member Nancy Diamond

Staff Present: City Administrator Kay Love; Deputy City Administrator Michael Fischer; Environmental/Public Works Director Stuart Moring; Transportation Director Steve Acenbrak; Community Development Director Alice Wakefield; Strategic Planning and Budgeting Director Keith Lee; Director of Human Resources Dan Roach; Economic Development Manager William Keir; Community Relations Manager Julie Brechbill; Building Operations Technician Doug Heieren; Deputy City Clerk Betsy Branch.

Pledge of Allegiance

REGULAR AGENDA

Community Development - Councilmember Betty Price

Approval for the Mayor and/or City Administrator to sign a contract with RKG Associates, Inc. for the Strategic Economic Development Plan in the amount of \$103,775.

Presented by Alice Wakefield, Director

1. *Approval for the Mayor and/or City Administrator to sign a contract with RKG Associates, Inc. for the Strategic Economic Development Plan in the amount of \$103,775.*

Community Development Director Alice Wakefield stated that after the bidding and evaluation process, the evaluation committee selected RKG Associates, Inc. as the lowest responsive, responsible bidder. The Administration / Finance Committee and the Community Development / Transportation Committee reviewed this item. Staff

was directed to revise the timeline to show the actual completion of the plan occurring after the Comprehensive Plan Imagine Roswell. In order to meet the state requirements and DCA review, the Comprehensive Plan must be completed by June 31, 2011. Staff recommended approval.

Mayor Wood asked if this project would be completed in phases, and their deliverables, as the project moves forward. Ms. Wakefield replied yes. The Mayor asked if Council is not satisfied with the progress, would they have the option of not continuing work with RKG. Ms. Wakefield replied that was correct.

Mayor Wood noted that since he was not present at the Committee Meeting for discussion related to the Strategic Economic Development Plan he would make his comments before the vote. Mayor Wood stated he agreed with the previous statements made by Mr. Gronholm and Mr. Mimms that Roswell needs to make some changes in order to see economic development. The City of Roswell needs to make changes in the way it does business. Mr. Gronholm discussed the need for incentives to see changes in economic redevelopment. The Mayor agreed with Mr. Mimms comments to have shared parking, shared retention ponds and community improvement districts and opportunity zones. Mayor Wood stated his biggest concern in no consensus on redevelopment in the ten (10) years the Council has been discussing it. Until the Council reaches a consensus, there will not be any redevelopment. Mayor Wood said "To make changes, this Council will have to go out on a limb and has to make some hard decisions. Until this Council gets political support for change, it is not going to make change because change always upsets some people." Having the business community's involvement now in support of this economic development plan is encouraging, that support had previously been missing. Without the business community, the economic development will not work. The business feasibility side of planning is necessary. The business community needs to support and take the leadership on economic development in Roswell. Mayor Wood noted consensus by Council for a 20-year vision of Roswell is necessary in order to have a successful development plan; otherwise it will be a waste of \$100,000. Mayor Wood stated if there consensus of the Council, and hopefully, with an economically feasible plan of the business community, he would support the plan with conditions and grave reservations to support spending this money.

Councilmember Price stated this is an idea that the city desperately needs. It was included in the FY 2011 budget so Council was aware going into this year that there were plans to do this. She stated her concern regarding "the process subsequent to the appropriation of the money" and "if there was enough input into this process to make it feasible to start immediately." Council packets for this item included a timeframe, which has been pushed back, so goals could be honed in on prior to this group getting started. Councilmember Price said she not seen the RFP, but had read the Project Understanding and was concerned about starting with section four; she was unfamiliar with sections one through three. She noted concern regarding the project kick-off meeting "with the steering committee comprised of leaders of creditable local housing agencies, social civic policy, advocacy, academic, business and development associations, networks and systems." Councilmember Price stated "I am not sure what that means and I am not sure who those people would be and how large a group that would be." In addition, she was concerned "that at the project kick-off meeting of that committee, and I don't know how that committee is selected, one of the questions is: what is the city's short term and long-term goals for economic development." Councilmember Price said there are many procedural questions to be answered before this group can get moving. Councilmember Price stated Council, at Committee, discussed the entity that is being considered for the contract and there history in other communities and locales. The City of Roswell, as a municipal body

has limitations in what is created. The City can support infrastructure and make sure zoning is adequate for plans but cannot create the jobs or the businesses that we want to attract. Council must be very clear on how they select and direct the group, and to have specific deliverables to can be utilized to go forward with a sound direction toward economic improvement.

Mayor Wood asked Councilmember Price what she would propose since this is her department.

Councilmember Price replied this could be one of Council's primary discussions when it sequesters for daylong discussions, to come up with specific requests of this entity of how Council would like them to narrow their focus because much of it appears to be repetition of the Comprehensive Plan. She proposed the approval of a contract including provisos that Council takes an active role in the set-up of the steering committee and other parameters for their deliverables.

Mayor Wood stated he would support a work session to discuss this, if that is the Council's pleasure to further review how it is implemented, set up, and organized. The Mayor said he would not support this as the subject of a retreat because he does not like day-to-day city business discussed at retreats, it gets away from open and transparent meetings and many people are interested in this subject; it could be discussed in Roswell at a work session, if the goal is to have a discussion. The Mayor stated he did not understand the need to have a discussion outside the presence of Roswell's citizens.

Councilmember Price replied that she agreed with the Mayor that a work session would be in order prior to the specifics of the charge, and expressed concern that Council was signing a contract without having given RKG specifics of their charge. Councilmember Price said "There are some questions listed under this project kick-off meeting that I doubt even Council could agree upon."

Mayor Wood stated motion options could be: a motion to approve; a motion to deny; a motion that amends it or to defer.

Councilmember Price replied that she had spoken to several people at the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Chair and Chair-elect of the Fulton County Development Authority, and "all suggested that we not rush into this if we are not clear as to what exactly we want to have them provide for us."

Motion: Councilmember Price moved to defer the Approval for the Mayor and/or City Administrator to sign a contract with RKG Associates, Inc. for the Strategic Economic Development Plan in the amount of \$103,775 until the February 14, 2011 Mayor and Council Meeting.

Mayor Wood noted that he suggested a deferral to a work session or a committee meeting. City Administrator Kay Love confirmed that a work session for the city pension program is scheduled for February 14 but the meeting could be rearranged or a special called work session could be held.

Councilmember Price stated her assumption was a work session would be held prior to February 14, 2011 Mayor and Council Meeting. Mayor Wood stated he preferred to have a work session on a Monday night following a regular meeting rather than on another day. The Mayor asked if it would be possible to meet the rest of the timeframe if the decision regarding the contract was made in February. Ms. Wakefield replied, "No, we will not have them available for the Comprehensive Plan Analysis in the Focus Area Workshops." Mayor Wood asked when the decision

would need to be available. Ms. Wakefield replied a decision tonight would provide the time to work through the procurement process and sign the contract.

Councilmember Igleheart asked about the plans for creating the Steering Committee. Ms. Wakefield explained that many plans done in the city include steering committee members with economic development and business focus, and residence input. The response provided to Council was the bidder's response to what city staff had included in the scope of work. Councilmember Igleheart noted that the steering committee would be appointed and approved by Council.

Councilmember Igleheart asked for confirmation that part of the plan is for Council to come up with the elements and items that Council wants to do, and not set prior to the contract, but that it is part of the deliverables and the items that Council can get to consensus on. Councilmember Igleheart said he understood the concerns and agreed with the elements, but Council is to set up to deal with them in the way that it should in order to move this forward.

Councilmember Wynn stated she does not support narrowing the focus. In order to make a good Comprehensive Plan and Economic Plan it is necessary to delve deep enough. She stated she was "not a proponent to tell the consultant what we want because that is what has gotten us in trouble before." This Council wants what is best for Roswell. Councilmember Wynn clarified that she does not want to restrict the Consultant, the staff, or the Steering Committee with parameters, except to bring the best plan possible to Council.

Councilmember Diamond stated somebody who has the bigger picture and resources is more equipped to know what is outside of Roswell and can look at us without unbiased opinions, as a "reality check." She spent time with the Alpharetta Economic Development Director to learn how they did their plan, what could have been done differently, and how they could wind their plan into ours. Councilmember Diamond said she disagreed that Council was rushing, and supported moving ahead.

Councilmember Dippolito stated the Economic Development Plan is the missing piece. There is a lot of time and energy being spent on the Comprehensive Plan, Council needs to make sure that it can be implemented. The consultant needs to tell us what the critical pieces are and what have they seen in other cities that work, what is unique about Roswell that they would recommend be pursued and push forward and market. Roswell's business community is a critical component needed to be an integral part of this whole process, and provide feedback so the consultants understand what works and what does not work. Councilmember Dippolito pointed out that Mr. Gronholm has been here several decades and knows what works and does not work. His input and the input of his colleagues are invaluable to that process. Councilmember Dippolito stated the luxury of sitting back and picking and choosing what businesses Roswell wants to locate here is gone. Roswell is in competition with all our neighbors and Metro Atlanta. Unless Roswell finds a way to be competitive, Roswell will not even be in the running. This is an opportunity to be in the forefront, be proactive, and help our local economy.

Councilmember Orlans stated he agreed that in the past, there has been some lack of consensus with Council. This Council is very aware of how economic development and redevelopment is necessary for the City and that it should consider all ideas. Councilmember Orlans supported moving this program forward.

Mayor Wood stated that during his thirteen (13) years as Mayor he has seen a lot of money spent on plans and had not yet seen a plan successful when Council did not have a goal in mind. Mayor Wood said he did not know if Council had a goal in mind

at this time. He clarified that Council has always had the best interest of Roswell in mind, but the problem has been that Council has not always shared the same idea of what is best for Roswell. Every time in the past that a plan began without a goal in mind, it has been a waste of money. The Mayor noted that the Comprehensive Plan is where Council creates the goal in mind, to see what the redevelopment looks like and Council reaches a consensus of what it wants to see.

2nd Motion: Councilmember Price motioned to have a work session followed by a meeting on February 14, 2011. Mayor Wood asked if Councilmember Price wanted to have a Special Called Work Session before that date. Councilmember Price replied yes. Mayor Wood clarified that the motion was for a Special Called Work Session and then to be brought forward to Council for a vote at the next regularly Council meeting on February 14, 2011. The motion failed for a lack of a second.

Councilmember Igleheart stated he understood the concerns of both Mayor Wood and Councilmember Price and agrees with them to a point, but Council has worked through those; it needs to get moving forward, because it does tie into the Comprehensive Plan.

3rd Motion: Councilmember Igleheart moved to Approve the Mayor and/or City Administrator to sign a contract with RKG Associates, Inc. for the Strategic Economic Development Plan in the amount of \$103,775. Councilmember Wynn seconded the motion. There was no public comment.

Councilmember Price stated Council has not provided adequate parameters to give an answer that will be useful. Questions regarding the project kick-off have not yet been answered. She stated "That is going to be key, who is guiding this entity."

Mayor Wood asked staff to explain the job of the steering committee. Ms. Wakefield replied the steering committee will function much like the CPAC Committee functions. Staff will work through gathering information and present the information to the steering committee. The steering committee will function as a "sounding board." Mayor Wood clarified that Councilmember Wynn stated she wants staff to put all the possible options that could be feasible on the table, which would come to Council and not be a steering committee decision. Ms. Wakefield indicated she understood and clarified that Council would make decisions. Mayor Wood said he was attempting to understand what the steering committee would do. His understanding is that Council wants no limitations or any parameters, and to determine what is economically feasible, not politically feasible. The Mayor asked if that is the goal, what will be the steering committee's role. Ms. Wakefield replied the steering committee will review and "digest" the information, and make recommendations that will be part of a plan presented to Council for approval. Everything will be considered from an economic development standpoint, such as the type of office space targeted businesses need.

Mayor Wood stated the Comprehensive Plan will tell the City of Roswell where it wants to be in 2030. Ms. Wakefield replied yes. Mayor Wood asked how that would dovetail with the steering committee. The Mayor was concerned that the steering committee efforts be efficient. Ms. Wakefield replied the Comprehensive Plan will be done by the end of June to mid-July, due to deadline for ARC and DC approval. The timeline indicated the Economic Development Plan for research and running analysis of data.

City Administrator Kay Love explained that the Mayor and Council will appoint the stakeholder committee; the committee will represent different disciplines, different factions, business community and residents for a different way of looking at things. One of the roles is to give Council initial reaction or feedback about many options.

Ms. Love provided the example that if the plan brings forward 38 options for discussion by the Mayor and Council, it could be said that the stakeholder committee had already reacted favorably to 28. Mayor and Council will narrow down those options for staff to get more comprehensive reaction.

Mayor Wood said he did not understand how this would dovetail with this Economic Development Plan since he thought the goal was necessary in order to know which path to take to achieve the goal. Ms. Wakefield replied the Comprehensive Plan is very broad based and high level, which looks at land use, housing, economic development, transportation, culture and natural resources, and intergovernmental relationships. The Comprehensive Plan does not provide the strategies to implement, to enhance and expand existing businesses, or indicate what the target industry is. Ms. Wakefield stated the Economic Development Plan digs deeper.

Councilmember Diamond stated she could argue that Council would have been better off having the Economic Development Plan done first to understand the possibilities. Other cities have brought in people to look globally at what is being done, what industries are in the growth mode, and what industries are looking for. Councilmember Diamond said her guess would be that Council will be looking at the 50 to 500-person business range and the related options. We would be looking at what kind of businesses are growing, for example energy companies, technology, what those companies are, how are they growing, and how Roswell can tap into that market. Mayor Wood stated this explanation now gives him a parameter of where Council is looking. If that goal has the consensus of the Council, to limit the field to where we are looking and give direction, he would support the plan.

A motion was made by Council Member Igleheart, seconded by Council Member Wynn, that this Item be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

In Favor: 6

After no further business, the Special Called Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.