WORK SESSION MEETING

April 24th, 2018

The Bessemer City Council met in work session on Tuesday, April 24th, 2018 at 1:00PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall. Proper notice was given.

Call to Order

Mayor Becky S. Smith called the meeting to order.

Members Present

Mayor Becky Smith, Council Members: Dan Boling, Joe Will, Donnie Griffin, Alfred Carpenter, and Sonny Boyd were all present. Council member Kay McCathen was absent. Also present were City Manager, James Inman, and department heads.

Department Reports

Bessemer City Department heads gave reports on their department status:

Economic Development Officer Josh Ross led the discussion of departmental goals for the 2018-2019 year. A public art master plan that includes an emphasis on downtown projects including Stinger Park and creation of a public arts council designed to assist with the artistic vision of the City were at the top of his list. Ross mentioned plans to continue supporting administration with the new public works building, streetscape projects, and Osage Mill. Lastly, Mr. Ross strives to become more strategic with the downtown development board and making historic downtown Bessemer City more attractive to potential business owners.

Human Resources Officer Josh Ross addressed Council regarding his future 2018-2019 goals for his department. Mr. Ross would like to move forward with the citizens academy in the Spring 2019.

Chief Tom Ellis addressed Council regarding the Police Department's goals. The department's goals include salary adjustments to compete with those of neighboring communities to attract quality officers, strategic plans to address the Opioid crisis, and changes to the DWI investigation procedure.

Parks & Recreation Director JoD Franklin addressed Council regarding his department's goals for 2019. His goals included securing funding for Stinger Park, increasing walkability and recreation programming in Bessemer City. Mr. Franklin also has plans to begin a legacy program in the senior division of parks and recreation. The legacy program would be a video archive of local seniors and their fondest memories of Bessemer City.

Finance Director Diane Jenkins addressed Council regarding the Finance & Customer Services goals for 2018-2019. Jenkins mentioned plans of moving back into City Hall after renovations have been completed downstairs, implementing Tyler Technologies accounting software, utility bill extensions, inactive gas meter access fees, and the discussion of a check policy.

Per City policy every resident is allotted two (2) utility extensions a year. However, after further inspection, it has been found that the policy is no longer economically feasible. By general consensus, Council moved to discontinue the program.

Finance Officer Jenkins further mentioned a problem with checks being returned due to insufficient funds. Jenkins stated that over 28 checks and $8,000 had been returned in 2017. Currently, there is no policy addressing limiting accounts with a history of returned checks. By general consensus, Council approved a returned check policy that prohibits accounts with two (2) returned checks to submit future payments by check. Instead payment must be submitted by certified check, money order, or cash.

Finance Officer Jenkins and Assistant City Manager, Jamie Ramsey addressed Council regarding gas meter access fees. Jenkins and Ramsey informed Council that efforts have been made to abandon inactive gas meters. Property owners with inactive gas meters have been notified that they may abandon their inactive meter. However, as the City is tasked with maintaining all gas meters a fee is paid by the City for all inactive meters. Thus, Jenkins and Ramsey request that Council approve a policy that permits the City to charge an access fee for property owners wishing to keep their inactive gas meter. By general consensus, Council approved the policy regarding access fees for inactive gas meters.

All three (3) Finance Department policies approved by Council general consensus, shall be included in the adopted 2018-2019 budget ordinance. Said changes will also be updated in the City's Finance Policies.

Public Works Director, Jamie Ramsey addressed Council with his 2018-2019 department goals. Mr. Ramsey's goals included improving gas lines in Southridge Business Park, replacing three (3) miles of water line in town to improve water quality and preservation, and the discussion of general improvements of the water plant.

City Manager's Report

City Manager, James Inman addressed Council regarding the 2018-2019 draft annual budget. A report on revenue and expenditure over the years was presented. Mr. Inman addressed a loss of revenue for the year due to low property revaluations and a decreased in sales tax received from the County.

Light discussion between City Manager Inman and Council regarding the following items ensued: City Hall renovations, Rolling Stock Vehicle program, Bessemer City Swimming Pool renovations, and changes to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

Council General Discussion

Mayor Smith opened the floor for Council general discussion. There was none.

Adjourn

Being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:41 PM by motion of Alfred Carpenter and unanimous vote.

Becky S. Smith, Mayor	Hydeia Y. Hayes, City Clerk