



**SAVANNAH CITY COUNCIL
(preliminary)
ACTION MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 18, 2020**

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

The special called meeting of the City Council was held at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom communication, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

PRESENT: Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding
Alderwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, Chairman of Council, Post 1, At-Large
Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, Post 2, At-Large
Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1
Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2
Alderwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3
Alderman Nick Palumbo, Vice-Chairman of Council, District 4
Alderwoman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, Mayor Pro-Tem, District 5
Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

OTHERS PRESENT:

Acting City Manager Michael B. Brown
City Attorney Bates Lovett
Clerk of Council Mark Massey
Melissa Carter, Chief Budget Officer
David Maxwell, Chief Financial Officer

Mayor Johnson called the special called meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

INVOCATION

1. The Invocation was provided by Mayor Johnson.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. Final Public Hearing to Receive Comments on the 2021 Service Program and Budget.

Following an overview by the City Manager, Mayor Johnson declared the public hearing open.

- **John Duke – opposed to increases in the Police budget and supports increases to the community services budget.**



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- **Rachel Shaner – concerned about the failure to adopt a reallocated budget in support of arts and community services, not Police; concerned about how defunding of the arts can occur but defunding of the Police did not occur.**
- **Owen Cooper – criticized spending \$66 million for Police and only \$19 million for community services.**
- **Claudia Edison – echoed previous concerns raised; indicated she was surprised about the increases in the Police budget; concerned about low-income housing and clean water; concerned about support to Spanish-speaking residents; and concerned about support not given to the areas outside of downtown.**
- **Rainé Blunk – concerned about the budget amount of the Police department, namely the additional \$2 million that was added.**
- **Rachel Ussery – concerned about the increases made to the Police budget and recommended investment in more proactive community programs to decrease crime before it happens.**
- **Leonora Moore – asked how the Police department will work with the community given the budget allocations and she recommended reallocating and redirecting budget resources.**
- **Chuck Feagain – concerned about comments made by the Mayor and City Manager regarding no substantive impacts in 2020 regarding no tax increases, no planned layoffs, etc.; and concerned about the funding increases made to the Police budget.**
- **Stanley Mosley – concerned about the retirees not receiving increases, especially when they have not reached one of the age/years of retirement thresholds.**

Mayor Johnson declared the public hearing closed. The Mayor and Aldermen discussed matters pertaining to the Proposed 2021 Budget.



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ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

3. Second Reading and Adoption of the Proposed 2021 Revenue Ordinance [which includes no Water, Sewer or Sanitation Utility Rate Increase; additional review expected July 1, 2021]. **(APPROVED #3, with Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voting no.)**

RESOLUTIONS

4. Adoption of the 2021 Service Program and Budget, Five-Year Capital Plan and Policy Document. **(APPROVED #4, with Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voting no.)**

Hearing no objections, Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 12:18 p.m.