

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CALLED SESSION
PIPERTON BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
October 27, 2020, 6:00 P.M.**

The Piperton Board of Mayor and Commissioners met in a special called session on October 27, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, with Board members: Mayor Henry Coats, Vice-Mayor Mike Binkley, Commissioner Preston Trotter, and Commissioner David Crislip. Commissioner Hugh Davis was absent. City Manager Steve Steinbach, Fire Chief Reed Bullock, City Attorney Gerald Lawson, Captain James Bennett and City Recorder Beverly Holloway were present along with William Meacham, Bill and Vicki Hancock, Elizabeth McCommon, Don and Ivy Mol, Wes Hicks, Bruce Yancey, Kaye Long, Beth Gallagher and et al were present

Agenda item 1. Call to order, establish quorum

Action taken: Mayor Henry Coats called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., and established that a quorum was present.

Agenda item 2. Prayer and Pledge to Allegiance to the American Flag

Action taken: Elizabeth McCommon led in the opening Prayer and Commissioner Preston Trotter led in the Pledge of Allegiance of the American Flag.

Agenda item 3. Consideration of Pinckney Property Purchase

City Manager Steve Steinbach stated the purpose of tonight's meeting is the Board's consideration of the purchase of the Pinckney Property, this property was put under contract on June 4th after considerable deliberations over many months, Pete Pinckney Sr. had come to see me prior to his passing to discuss options for the property, he had been speaking with several developers and after the opportunity was presented to the Mayor and the Board discussed it, it was made a part of the capital budget for our current fiscal year 2021 and upon adoption of the FY 2021 budget (July 1st) we commenced with our due diligence efforts and to date we have had phase 1 environmental audit conducted which turned up clean, we have a home inspection and all the alta surveys done, we have reviewed the property from a number of standpoints, the contract due diligence period has expired, the contract is slated to be acted on by the Board and ultimately closed by the end of the month, the purpose of this meeting is to satisfy a contract provision that requires the Board to act in its entirety with regard to the purchase, Mr. Steinbach reviewed the survey for the benefit of the Board and the audience, the entirety of the property excluding the rights of way on Hwy 196 consists of 33.5 acres, the property is separated by Hwy 196, there is a complex consisting of almost 20 acres on the south side of the property with a gas easement extending through the property consisting of about 2 acres, so we have 8 acres on one side and 9 acres on the other for consideration of a variety of uses that is yet to be determined, the Board approved as part of its fiscal 2021 budget for master planning to take place on this and that would be the next step assuming the Board approves and ratifies the purchase of the property, and on the north side, it is roughly a total of 12 acres including the main house site which is platted separately, the original property extends to the east of the north side of the Thrasher site and during the due diligence process the Thrashers presented the City with right of first refusal that was executed between them and

Mr. Pinckney Sr., the City was not aware of this and our attorney has successfully negotiated the sale by the Pinckney's to the Thrashers prior to our closing of the property of roughly 2 acres and given the location obviously the Thrashers desired to have a little bit of a buffer and it doesn't impact the functionality for the City's intended use in the future and additional per the contract there was an adjustment by Mr. Pinckney Jr. around the perimeter of his existing property containing about 1.27 acres, part of the deliberation in terms of the Board's ultimate decision as to whether or not this property satisfies the City's long term growth requirements is based on the large part on its logistical location, so the prospect of the City being able to acquire this iconic property along with the historical house that is located almost in the dead center of our corporate boundary, in addition the property is contiguous with the existing Public Works facility site and across the street (City Hall) another acre, and logistically the acquisition makes sense, this property given its gross acreage provides Piperton the ability to not only provide for a Municipal Center in any of these pods and again that decision has not been made and I envision that will be a long term process and public participation as part of that process once the City retains the services of an architect to master plan the property, also shown are examples of 4 communities and their City Hall locations (2 large and 2 small communities); Collierville's Town Hall site sits on approximately 10 acres and is part of a large municipal complex with a walking trail behind it, this facility was sized and designed to facilitate its needs, Germantown-their main City Hall site sits on approximately 8 acres and they have a complex that extends to the north and takes in the Performing Arts Theatre and gross acres there is almost 40 acres, Lakeland has about 13 acres and has a current City Municipal Complex that they have probably outgrown but they have additional acreage to expand and they have included a park component as part of theirs, and Arlington currently sits in the core of the City but they have rapidly outgrown that facility and they have acquired 30 acres in its historic core area some years ago to plan for a park, and library in addition to its municipal facility, so in order to plan for orderly expansion when this facility is in a core area this property checks all the boxes and it is walkable, our current City Hall facility sits on just over an acre and there has been some conversation if you need additional space why don't you just expand that and in his personal opinion is the acreage is just not there with the railroad to the north and it would not have sufficient parking, and if the sewer area was removed to provide for buildable space we still would not have adequate space.

Mayor Coats stated we are looking at a new City Hall in maybe 8 or 10 years, we are fine in this building right now but when we build a new City Hall I would like to turn the existing City Hall into a facility that can house ambulances along with the EMT's to run those ambulances to have a Piperton service but we do not have the money right now.

Mr. Steinbach stated that is a broad overview of the physical characteristics of the property, the house itself is an old house but it is a historic house, it is an iconic property, if the City were to plant a flag and start somewhere this is as good of location as any, I don't think it is the will of the Board at least as it has been conveyed to me and obviously they will speak for themselves that the house is going to be gutted, modernized, and renovated, it is a gem to be preserved and there has been some conversation about a transitional use for the administrative staff, minimal impact on the property itself so that we can get out of the rent that we are paying currently at our current location but my understanding the desire is to look at a larger long term complex with the preservation of the structure for the benefit and enjoyment of its residents and there are a lot of acreage to provide for a multi-

purpose municipal complex that would include park land perhaps a municipal facility reworking this juggernaut of an intersection here, just a lot of possibilities and the fact that it is located where it is located makes it a very attractive opportunity for the City.

Action taken: Commissioner Trotter moved to recess for audience comments, seconded by Commissioner David Crislip. The Motion received all affirmative votes.

Vicki Hancock stated it is the best idea you ever had, it makes so much more sense than anything.

Don Mol inquired we don't have any plans like for the property right behind us that approximate 20 acres, there is not really any plans set in stone at this point.

Mayor Coats stated no, our main objective now is to buy this property for the future.

William Meacham stated if we don't buy it, what will happen to it, will a developer come in and buy it and we won't know what is going it there.

Mayor Coats stated probably, a developer had gone to Mr. Pinckney Sr. and they actually had a plan and there was 28 houses on just the north property and if they would have done that they would have probably bought the south portion and probably put 40 plus homes on it, the zero lot or garden homes.

Bill Hancock stated we have lost so many historical monuments and mementos around the country and it is well worth it while if we can preserve this.

Mayor Coats stated everyone knows Mr. Sam Piper was the one that original built part of the house in 1878 and that is our name sake, if we preserve the front part of the house as is we can probably get funding from the historical standpoint and won't cost the City much at all.

Vicki Hancock inquired if there is anyway to have it designated as a historical site.

Mayor Coats stated we will look into that as far as the building is concerned, if there are no other comments I would like for some people to swap out with the people waiting outside for a few minutes, thank you so much.

Don Mol inquired what is the normal way to do business with this, the way we find out what the plans were, like back in June you said you made the plans to do this, is this normally how you do things.

Mr. Steinbach stated anybody who has had the experience of purchasing real estate whether it is land for development for your own personal use understands that the process its self can be cumbersome, you are dealing with real estate brokers and when you are a municipal corporation it becomes that much more cumbersome so when it comes to buying or purchasing real estate it is not like it is done in the private sector, we have to be more transparent about the process, it is a valid question how does that process happen, the Mayor has made it clear for a number of years that the City was open to suggestions from a variety of land owners and we have had proposals from other developers, Mr. Pinckney had come to see me to get ideas of what might be appropriate on the property and after the private community had reached out he was not really happy with the concepts that he has seen and he came back and the suggestion was this something that the City might be interested in and the City has had a land use plan on the books for over 10 years and if you look at the land use plan you see right in the middle there is a blue spot and that stands for institutional use, so it always was the vision of the previous administration that this area could be redeveloped, developed along the lines of what it never was which was an identifiable town square something we don't have like Collierville has and that has literally been on the books for over 10 years so when this opportunity was presented to us again it

was innocent as a conversation led to another conversation and the Mayor tell me I think the Pinckney's maybe interested in selling this property, take a look at it and tell me what you think and that led to the Board getting involved in the conversation, one thing led to another and we were able to put the property under contract without a competing developer out bidding the City and so that is how it came about.

Ivy Mol stated our concern is when this initial housing development came in, we were sent letters and notified to come to the meeting to discuss the proposal, we as direct property line owners were not notified by the City, we found out about it word of mouth so political things aside it seemed it kind of snuck in on us.

Mayor Coats stated we could have probably done a better job but we have been looking at this property publically in these meeting and the minutes going out on these meetings for 9 months.

Ivy Mol stated the Pinckney's came to us offering did we want to buy the property behind us and we declined and we are completely for this project but our concern is it kind of got put in without notifications or inviting to a meeting like we were for the other housing development, that was our concern how it all came about.

Mr. Steinbach stated I will take responsibility for that as City Manager again trying to explain the process as how a private developer would go about acquiring real estate and until the City was able to get it under contract, we were essentially very discreet in our conversations and as part of that process until we could get it under contract but from a conversation standpoint it was budgeted, it had been talked about budgeted and talked about but once and the City Attorney can attest to the fact that dealing with the Pinckney's and their desires and demands it was a shifting thing until we had it wrapped up in an iron clad contract, I was very concerned on behalf of the City and the Board that the promise that we had the property could have slipped out of our grasp because somebody moved in under us and outbid us, to the extent we weren't able to be more vocal about it, I apologize.

Mayor Coats stated it was not iron clad until 2 weeks ago when all the property surveys were all done, we have been doing due diligence as far as an appraisal, environmental studies on all the land to make sure there was no contamination, a house inspection was done so we have done a lot between the time we initiated it just like you do with a house before you buy it.

Audience member inquired what is the cost that you have already spent on it and what is the estimate to bring it up to code if you are going to have it as a public space, it has to meet ADA requirements and all that.

Mayor Coats stated it depends on what we do with the building before we have to upgrade it at all, if we move Admin to the building which will be at least a year from now at least because that is how long we have left on our remaining rental property.

Mr. Steinbach stated we budgeted \$15,000.00 in sequential fiscal years for the due diligence, we spent roughly \$7,000.00 which was the low bid for the survey, \$1,500.00 for the home inspection, \$2,000.00 for the environmental audit, we've got attorney fees which we have yet to get his bill and then we had a structural engineer do a cost estimate after the home inspection to tell us what it would cost to stabilize the structure because as the Mayor noted there are no immediate plans other than stabilizing and preserving the structure, the Board has not directed me or staff to come up with a plan for the facility itself other than just stabilizing, so \$15,000.00 to provide for some additional pier work that needs to happen under the house (it is an old conventional foundation), \$2,200.00 rotten

wood repair, and then it is not leaking but if the Board desires to put a roof on it that would probably be another \$15,000.00 so well within the budgeted amount that has been allotted but again as I pointed out previously the Board has budgeted in excess of \$25,000.00 to do a master plan on the entire property and that would be a more public process at that point everybody gets to weigh in on it so there are no immediate plans to renovate the house and turn it into offices, we've got a small administrative staff now and the bottom area would suffice with minimal renovation costs so until we hire an architect to actually make the determination as to what the highest use will be ultimately for the structure whether it is preserved for a historic structure much like the White house in Collierville and left for that purpose, limited office space that is up to the Board to make that decision based on counsel that we haven't received yet but the immediate costs are simply to preserve the structure as is and maintain it and obviously Mrs. Pinckney lives in it now and has lived in it so it is a functioning facility and the immediate concerns are stabilizing the foundation and it is not like the property is going to fall in but the structural engineer indicated that we need to spend around \$15,000.00 to address some piers that have deteriorated and some rotten wood beyond that it is satisfactory in its current state.

Commissioner Trotter stated even if we did nothing with the house itself, the value we would be getting for the property comes to about \$39,000.00 per acre assigning no value at all to the house, one of the properties we were offered was \$40,000.00 an acre so we would be paying less for this property than what we were offered even with the house on it, so those other decisions we are talking about are additional ones that we will be making as we go forward well into the future probably for the next 30 years.

Commissioner Crislip stated when we first started talking about this and it became available there has to be a center at some point, we are not going to grow if we don't have a center and all of our municipal activities would be surrounded in one location and this just fell into our laps in a very special way.

Commissioner Trotter stated if we don't lock up land now it is not going to be available when we need it.

Audience member inquired what happened to the property at Piperton Preserve.

Mayor Coats stated that was 4 acres and we never came to an agreement with the developer so it would not have been enough.

Don Mol stated it makes sense to keep everything centrally located the only thing I have a negative thing to say is how we came about finding out about it, it would have been nice to know what the plan was and we are good with it because Pete Sr. had come to us like I said and he showed us the plan and we did not like it at all and so we were considering buying some of the property and he passed, but we are glad but we heard some of the possible uses but it sounds like to me there is nothing set in stone about what we are going to do with it because we heard maybe a walking trail going around that back 20 acres area, to which the Mayor said that is a possibility.

Mayor Coats stated we are working on a zip code finally for Piperton, I met with Collierville about 3 or 4 months ago and they filled out the papers to give us a zip code that is the start of the process, I have met with United States Congressman David Kustoff last month and they are going to help me pursue the zip code for Piperton, it is a 2 to 4 year process and once we get a zip it will do a lot of things for us as far as tax revenue because sometimes our tax revenue gets mixed up with Collierville, if we get our own zip code maybe 5 to 10 years the Federal Government would say we are busy enough where you

need a post office out here and this would be another area that we could have as a part of the central location of the City, I don't know what is going to happen in the 20 to 30 years all I know is this is a bargain at less than \$38,000.00 an acre even without the house.

Mr. Mol stated someone down the street from us just pay \$64,000.00 an acre.

Mayor Coats stated the property across the street is over \$100,000.00 an acre.

Audience member inquired how many acres this was.

Mr. Steinbach stated it is 32.14 acres in the final survey.

Mayor Coats stated with about 3.5 acres of pipeline which we cannot build a building on it.

Commissioner Crislip stated in long term there is another thing that you want to think about too, we are going to have green line that is going to happen, Piperton is not going to stop growing and we have to take advantage because those things are going to come too and that will matter for quality of life.

Mayor Coats stated he still envisions all the communities' access to City Hall and all via golf cart, that is a long ways away but that is a possibility.

Action taken: Commissioner Trotter moved to reconvene the meeting, seconded by Vice-Mayor Binkley. The Motion received all affirmative votes.

Action taken: Vice-Mayor Binkley moved to proceed with the purchase of the Pinckney House, seconded by Commissioner Trotter. The Motion received all affirmative votes.

Agenda item 4. Adjournment

Action taken: Vice-Mayor Binkley made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Crislip. The Motion received all affirmative votes and the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Holloway, City Recorder,

Approved: _____ date: _____