

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 23, 2020

Committee Members Present:

Commissioner Allison Wright, Committee Chair
Commissioner Russell Edwards
Commissioner Mariah Parker
Commissioner Mike Hamby

Committee Members Absent:

Commissioner Ovita Thornton

Visitors:

Jake Drukman
April Cifuentes

Staff:

Deborah Lonon, Assistant Manager
Judd Drake, Attorney
Sherrie Hines, Assistant Attorney
Michael Petty, Assistant Attorney
Doug Hansford, Building Permits & Inspection
Kent Kilpatrick, Leisure Services

John Spagna, Building Permits & Inspection
Melinda Cochran Davis, Leisure Services
Sgt. Laura Lusk, Police Department
Ryan Thornton, Economic Development
Sarah George, Recorder

Committee Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

A. **Approval of Minutes:**

Commissioner Edwards noted “quick claim” should be changed to “quit claim” on the November minutes.

Commissioner Edwards made a motion to approve the November 21, 2019 Minutes, and Commissioner Parker seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Commission Identified Items of Interest:

Consideration of establishing a minimum drink price for downtown bars as recommended in the Downtown Public Health Study (Mayor Girtz assigned to LRC on January 8, 2019)

Michael Petty provided a draft ordinance to the Committee in November, which included some language from Statesboro, GA regarding training requirements. He requested feedback from the Committee on the draft ordinance. Commissioner Wright explained that she believed the Committee was also interested in including some other training topics, as well as learning more about the timing of launching the new requirements and whether or not it should be tied to next year’s license disbursements. Michael Petty advised that, since it is not tied to prerequisites to obtain licenses, legally we can go ahead and have them due now; however, practically, we need to discuss how quickly we can set up the training and expect people to complete it.

Commissioner Wright inquired about recommendations for methods to effectively communicate the changes to license holders. Michael Petty explained that we may be able to use the renewal letters that are sent at the end of the year. Sgt. Lusk agreed that the mailing could be used and added that social media could be an option as well. Sgt. Lusk recommended that the requirements be launched in time for January 1st license renewals.

Commissioner Edwards expressed agreement with the training requirements referenced in the proposed draft ordinance and inquired as to the next steps for the Committee to identify the training to recommend to the full Mayor and Commission. Sgt. Lusk advised that the Police Department's recommendation would be to allow training from an approved list of vendors that meet the requirements for custom training set by the Committee. Commissioner Edwards asked if an approved list of training providers should be used or if the government should submit a RFP with certain requirements of a training program and have the awarded vendor be the sole training provider. Michael Petty advised that this would be a policy issue, and it could be done either way. Commissioner Wright explained that she thought it would be better to have one vendor, and this would expedite the process of confirming training completion. Commissioner Hamby agreed.

Commissioner Wright also inquired as to whether or not anti-discrimination training could also be included. Commissioner Hamby agreed that anti-discrimination training should be included.

Sgt. Lusk noted that the proposed draft ordinance did not include any discussion of service permit requirements for servers and bouncers. Michael Petty advised that the draft proposed ordinance does require every bar to keep a file for each employee with a record that they have completed the training certification and a copy of the employee's photo ID; if a service permit is desired, the Committee would need to decide what else they would like to require. Commissioner Parker stated she did not feel a need for anything further and expressed concern that service permits would place too much burden on the worker. Sgt. Lusk advised that the service permit would assist in enforcement and would include a revocation process for repeat offenders found in violation of ordinance requirements. Commissioner Edwards inquired as to what burden the training would have on the worker, and Sgt. Lusk explained that the only burden would be price. The price burden would be for both the training and the service permit.

Commissioner Wright asked what the Police Department would recommend. Sgt. Lusk advised that she had spoken with Chief Spruill and the Police Department would like to see every bartender, server, and doorman permitted, along with completing required training.

Commissioner Wright requested the Police Department work with the Attorney's Office to modify the draft proposed ordinance to capture accurately the terminology and components the Police Department recommends, and inform the Committee of the process and workflow for training and permitting.

The Committee requested staff provide the following information in advance of the next meeting:

- A detailed written product of the training process and costs
- A detailed written product of the permitting process and costs
- A differentiation between the training and permitting processes, where necessary
- The revised ordinance from the Attorney's Office that is aligned with the written detailed training process and permitting process
- Relevant updates to stricter punishments for violations in our alcohol ordinance, including any recommendations from the work done in 2017

Commissioner Wright asked the Committee if they wanted to request the scope to be extended to capture additional topics, including changes to license revocations, training, stricter punishments, and permits. The Committee agreed that the Mayor should be consulted to seek his approval for an expanded scope.

Doug Hansford advised that Code Enforcement may have additional capacity in the future to help with training and outreach regarding the ordinance requirements, if the position they have requested is approved. Commissioner Edwards asked how that education would occur. Doug Hansford explained that it has not been fully developed, but he would anticipate their role would be more proactive in nature to prevent violations before they happen.

Motorized Vehicles on Multi-Use Paths (Mayor Girtz assigned to LRC on January 8, 2019)

Deborah Lonon summarized past discussion regarding motorized vehicles on multi-use paths. The Committee had previously inquired as to how far Jacobs Engineering staff, employed in our SPLOST Office, could go with speaking to property owners about easements. As the SPLOST contract will be submitted for RFP, Jacobs is even more limited in what it is that they are able to do. Deborah advised that, at this time, we cannot proceed in asking SPLOST to renegotiate easements.

Kent Kilpatrick also mentioned that the Committee previously discussed the potential for an ordinance change. The ordinance currently prohibits motorized vehicles. Commissioner Hamby expressed interest in revisiting the ordinance. Commissioner Edwards advised that he had previously spoken with Attorney Judd Drake regarding the easements and their original intent. One approach they had discussed was to first focus on renegotiating easements with the University of Georgia, as one of the more prominent owners of property with easements to be renegotiated, to get them on board. Furthermore, they discussed the question of how to regulate motorized vehicles and believed the top speed of the motorized vehicle would be a good method to use.

Judd Drake advised that he believes it would be prudent to speak with the University of Georgia, especially with their Bulldog Bike Program that will be launched soon. He believes they will be interested.

Commissioner Edwards made a motion that the Attorney, and his staff, enter discussions and negotiations with UGA over the easement revision to allow electric motorized devices not to exceed 19 mph or any other limit. Commissioner Hamby seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

This topic will be on the agenda for February to receive an update.

Schedule/Agenda Changes

The next LRC meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. in City Hall Room 301B.

Commissioner Edwards made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Parker seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.