

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

August 31, 2010

A special called meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen was held on Tuesday, August 31, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. in the Administration Conference Room of the Municipal Center.

Mayor Sharon Goldsworthy was present and presiding.

The following Aldermen were present: Ernest Chism, John Drinnon, Carole Hinely, and Mike Palazzolo. Alderman Billingsley was absent. Staff present: Patrick Lawton, Tom Cates and Dotty Johnson.

Call to Order

Mayor Goldsworthy called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. at the request of an alderman for the purpose of identifying what City government, the board, and City personnel can and cannot do in terms of communicating or dealing with the issue of metro government, i.e., consolidation.

City Attorney Tom Cates explained what the law allows the City to do. He put things into two categories: If you are not into "City money", you have the right to take any action as a board or as an individual. As a group you can take a position. The question about whether any money can be contributed to an organization that is opposed to consolidation or if the City could itself spend taxpayer money to buy ads, etc., he said that Tennessee had not precisely decided that question. His advice was that unless the Board felt it was desperately needed to contribute taxpayer money, he would suggest not doing it.

Several questions arose as to how the City could legally get this passed through the legislature. The problem would be the time it takes to get this done.

There was a discussion as to where the pro consolidation group was getting their money.

Mr. Cates suggested maybe a speaker's bureau could be formed. The speakers could be educated on the subject and go out to community groups along with the Aldermen. He also suggested the Board adopt a resolution at every Board meeting between now and the election to reaffirm the position of the Board.

Mayor Goldsworthy stated that Alderman Chism had suggested a bulletin in the utility newsletter and make it a FAQ because we cannot use City resources to advocate opposition, you can present information that will help people understand outcomes and consequences. This information could also be placed on the website.

Alderman Drinnon asked to go on record stating that the Mayor had done an excellent job at the forum the previous night. The Board agreed.

Ideas were tossed around as to how the City could get the word out to the citizens and let them know that the Board is against the consolidation of governments and stay within the limits of the law.

The Board decided to start with a speaker's bureau and named a few people they would like to have speak to the citizens. The Mayor would meet with the group and they would be educated on the pros and cons of consolidation so that the citizens would know the right decision to make. An Alderman would accompany the speaker and they should cover every neighborhood and let them know that the City is opposed to the consolidation issue.

Yard signs are being made by the "Save Shelby Now" group. Two men, Ron Williams from northwest Shelby County and Tom Guleff from mid-town put together a movement called "SaveShelbyCounty.org" and they posted some signs. This group, along with the suburban mayors and the chamber alliance (briefly), emerged a group called "Save Shelby Now" and they are developing a website. This is a single issue political action committee so it can now receive and disburse funds for all the things encountered in a political campaign. The person heading this group is Jon Crisp and he is the general manager of the Holiday Inn - Wolfchase.

The Board did some brain storming as to what the City could do within the legal perimeters given. Some of the suggestions decided were:

1. Complete a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) brochure for the utility bill.
2. Establish a Speaker's Bureau made up of citizens and aldermen
3. Revise and readopt the resolution against consolidation
4. Coordinate with "Save Shelby Now".
5. Host Town Hall meeting at GPAC with pros and cons

Speakers Bureau could be made up of the following people if they will participate: Jack Parnell, Steve Priddy, Dick Vosburg, John Wagner, Henry Evans, Mike Harless, Sidney Kuehn, Ann Knox, Ken Hoover, and Chuck Cromis.

Citizens to form local Pac - advertising

Use e-mail blasts through CONA, Boards and Commissions, and personal e-mail.

Form a political action committee, identify a person to be the treasurer and head this committee. The committee goes to the Election Commission, designates a treasurer and identifies it as a single issue political action committee and open a bank account.

The Mayor will contact the people suggested to be a part of the Speakers Bureau.

The "Save Shelby Now" group is working on the yard signs, completing the design and securing a printer and then distributing them to the communities.

A Speakers Bureau can be encouraged to solicit yard sign locations whenever they talk to someone. There are ways to network this efficiently and quickly.

There was a discussion on some of the opponents that are very active and they live in the unincorporated areas where there are no leaders.

Mr. Cates stated the importance of all this should be to get the vote out. It is very important to get the numbers against consolidation in the municipalities. This is something that the Speakers Bureau needs to do as well.

Mayor Goldsworthy suggested instead of a forum where there are designated speakers answering questions from moderators, let each side have a number of minutes to present whatever they want to say and then open it to the floor. It may be that each side would want to have two or three people participate because it helps to have a tag team to present different perspectives. Each side would get 20 minutes which is 40 minutes with an introduction of 15 minutes and then anyone who steps up gets 2 minutes. This would give the City a format for the Town Hall Meeting that will meet the City's obligation to be objective and to be able to use City property and resources.

Mr. Lawton suggested October 4 at 7:00 p.m. in GPAC for the Town Hall Meeting.

Motion by Mr. Chism, seconded by Mr. Palazzolo, for the Board and City of Germantown to proceed with the following actions regarding the consolidation referendum:

1. Placement of a FAQ in the utility newsletter.
2. Speakers Bureau involving citizens and aldermen to be composed of recruited citizens to be trained in delivering a message.
3. To revise and readopt the resolution of opposition.
4. To coordinate activities with "Save Shelby Now".
5. Host a Town Hall Meeting at GPAC on October 4 with said format.

ROLL CALL: Chism – yes, Drinnon-yes, Hinely-yes, Palazzolo-yes. Motion approved.

Mayor Goldsworthy asked Mr. Lawton to contact some of these people and a date will be set to train the speaker's bureau.

Mayor Goldsworthy stated at last night's meeting how wonderful it was to see all five aldermen sitting next to each other in a united way and it was a good thing for our Board. She stated how reassuring it was when representing the City to know that the people you are working with are absolutely 100% with you. She stated the Board performed as a team and when people go to vote, they will be informed. If they are well informed, they will vote in a way that gives Germantown its very best prospects in the future.

Alderman Hinely thanked Alderman Drinnon for suggesting this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

Sharon Goldsworthy, Mayor

Dotty Johnson, City Clerk/Recorder