Members present were Chairman Taft Matney and Committee members Diane Kuzniar and Mayor Terry Merritt. Mayor Merritt is on the committee while Council Seat 3 remains vacant. Community Development Director Van Broad and City Administrator Brandon Madden were also present.

1. Call to Order- Chairman Matney

2. Public Comment- None

3. Reading and Approval of Minutes
  
a. EPD Committee Meeting: December 2, 2019- Mayor Merritt made a motion to approve the minutes with Councilwoman Kuzniar seconding.

4. Reports or Communications from City Officers
  
a. Budget Review- The department is in good shape financially. A check for $100,000 will go in for utility tax credit towards the Hughes Development project at Brookfield Oaks Drive. There are also a couple of budget reconciliations that will happen in the future.

b. Department Reports- None

5. Unfinished Business- None

6. New Business
  
a. Discussion of Potential Moratorium on Types of Discount Stores- The City was made aware of another discount store looking to locate in the area. We would like to look at our zoning ordinance to see if there is something we can do to limit the scope or location of those types of stores. We have done this in the past for Cash for Gold types of businesses. Discount stores are proliferating many communities. Brandon said there is a potential for oversaturation of discount stores, particularly within a two-mile radius of city hall. There is cause for concern given the size of our city and we also want to protect small businesses and grocery stores.
Staff is recommending a 6 to 9 month moratorium on discount stores to allow staff time to look at our zoning ordinances and make recommendations on how to proceed to reduce the number or control the way discount stores come into the market. Chairman Matney said he had sent some information to staff back in November after seeing a news report regarding actions Fort Worth, Texas was taking towards discount stores. Dekalb County in Georgia has passed a moratorium on these types of stores as well. We are trying to improve the City and need a chance to draft an ordinance regarding these stores.

Mayor Merritt made a motion to forward this to council with a recommendation to approve the moratorium. Councilwoman Kuzniar seconded the motion. Mayor Merritt asked if it would be appropriate to include information in the minutes on the rationale for this discussion.

The rationale for this discussion is as follows:

- Discount stores can take a toll on grocery stores and, in many cases, are reducing people’s access to fresh food since they do not provide access to fresh produce.
- The discount stores are becoming a poor substitute for grocery stores.
- Discount stores usually employ fewer people than the grocery stores and in some instances may force grocery stores to move out of the area, creating food deserts; especially if the community does not have multiple grocery stores.
- The City is “maxed out” when it comes to discount stores, the City does not have the capacity for any additional discount stores.
- New discount stores will begin to change the character of the City.

Van mentioned that in our recruitment efforts, we have heard this type of feedback regarding our City.

The vote was unanimous (3-0).

b. Motion to enter into Executive Session for the consideration of Economic Development matters regarding City Center as allowed by State Statute Section 30-4-70 (a)(5)

c. Motion to enter into Executive Session for the consideration of a contractual matter involving GMC as allowed by State Statute Section 30-4-70 (a)(2)
Mayor Merritt made a motion to go into executive sessions. Councilwoman Kuzniar seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous (3-0).

Chairman Matney reconvened the meeting. Mayor Merritt reported no decisions were made and no actions taken.

d. Possible action on items discussed in executive session- Mayor Merritt made a motion to extend the terms of the GMC agreement an additional 12 months to allow GMC to provide cost analysis on the proposed Swamp Rabbit Trail Pedestrian Bridge over 385 with the cost of the extension approved at the standard hourly rates included in the original agreement. Councilwoman Kuzniar seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous (3-0).

7. Public Comment- None
8. Committee Concerns- None
9. Adjourn- Chairman Matney adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Miller
Municipal Clerk