



TENNESSEE

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04 MAY 2016

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

03 MAY 2016 CITY COUNCIL RECAP FROM CHAIRMAN KEMP CONRAD

Yesterday was a busy one at City Hall. We held budget hearings in the morning and voted on over 40 items on our regular agenda. Budget hearings covered our Fire Department, the city's technology and IT, how we manage and recruit our workforce, and more. We heard the first reading of the potential sale of the old Central Police Building, an opportunity which, if finalized in two weeks as scheduled, will breathe new life into a historic space in the heart of downtown. We approved mounted aerial surveillance cameras in two more neighborhoods, continuing the momentum of the new Neighborhood Sentinel Program, spearheaded by Councilman Spinosa in partnership with Mayor Strickland and his administration.

The agenda also included the first of three readings on a caption Ordinance to balance the needs of all Overton Park stakeholders. I'd like to take a few moments to really dive into this one.

All Ordinances receive three readings and are published at least once in a newspaper of general circulation before final approval of the Council. Under our rules, debate on all ordinances is deferred until third reading; thus, the initiation of the process yesterday did not impact the normal opportunity of the public to be heard on the ordinance before final adoption and before the minutes are approved. The critics of the Council's prior action cannot reasonably reject a process that is more deliberate and should welcome it. Codifying by ordinance a prior resolution of the Council is consistent with the Council's past actions involving parks and ensures that this important legislation is published in the Code of Ordinances and unlike a resolution is readily accessible by the public. Frankly, this process, which was contemplated in the Resolution, allows all sides of the debate a fair opportunity, under our rules, to provide comment and advocacy prior to final adoption. Consistent with the Charter, every ordinance is subject to amendment prior to final adoption.

Regarding the Overton Park matter, when Mayor Strickland took office, he brought the Zoo and Overton Park into mediation, an action in which the Council has participated fully and which the Council enthusiastically supports. Bringing these two respected partners of the City into agreement on the future of all of the incredible resources found in Overton Park is the best possible outcome for the future management of Overton Park and all of the stakeholders.

Speaking only for myself, it is my hope that the parties to the mediation can reach an accommodation that is reasonable for both sides before June 30 and that this solution can be incorporated into the final version of the Ordinance. The mediation, which has already produced



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two major possible solutions, has a deadline set for the end of June. When we reach the end of those discussions, if successful as I hope, we will have already set in motion this legal framework to codify our support of those results by making them law.

During Public Comments at the end of the meeting, the question was asked, “Will this ordinance be amended based upon the outcome of mediation?” I replied, “Absolutely, categorically.”

My comments regarding the small, destructive fringe element that is impeding a solution have received a lot of attention. My comments have been taken out of context, as I was not referring to park supporters who don’t want parking on the Greensward—indeed, I am one of them. This comment was clearly directed at only a small few who have vandalized Overton Park and zoo property the past two weekends and made threats and illegal offenses against law abiding people; these actions are costing the City precious police resources. More importantly, this small minority of people are, knowingly or unknowingly, derailing and sabotaging the prospects of a reasonable compromise and reconciliation through mediation. Moreover, the strident and disrespectful public commentary by some has effectively mooted the advocacy of other well intentioned citizens who support a reasonable resolution through the legislative process. A small sampling of this inappropriate commentary is included as an example.

At our full meeting, I elaborated as follows: “I genuinely cherish the positive civic activism and engagement of those who brought their passion before the Council today. I simply urge all those involved in this discussion, from the Council to the OPC to the Zoo to those on social media, to remain positive and also, to create an environment in which solutions can be discovered and realized, to the benefit of all involved.”

Kemp Conrad
Chairman

City of Memphis



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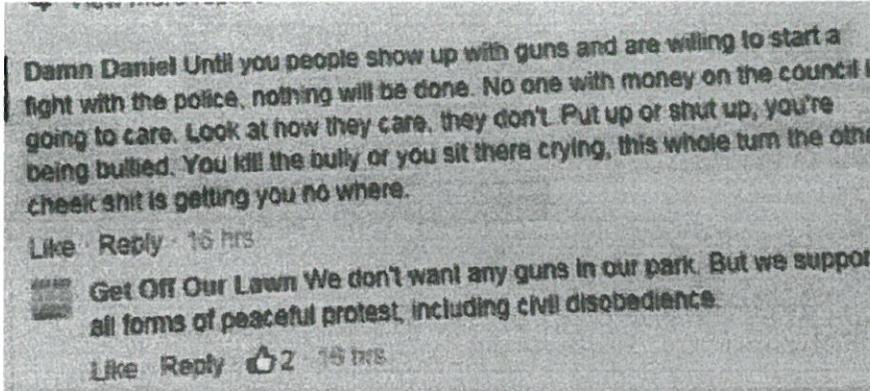
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Media and

the article):

Yesterday at 9:27 PM

going to get extremely ugly. Many people have
 holding back for mediation to complete, since
 Greensward parking would have a
 - let's just say I wouldn't park my car on the
 Greensward this weekend.

sitting on...
 ing when they buy...
 anything EXCEPT parking...
 parking needs to be the Zoo's problem, and
 s. There is space for a multi-use parking
 between Brooks, MCA, Levitt, and the Zoo. ALL
 facilities need that parking garage.
 n the most sedentary and overfed Memphian
 k on the street and walk a couple of blocks to
 o. It would NOT do them ANY harm.

mention that the Zoo has an extra \$20 MILLION
 ne very rich and powerful people in Memphis
 mping on the rest of us. As they are very muc
 accustomed to doing.

And GET OFF OUR LAWN you redneck Phil
 your monster SUVs! BEWARE! It's spraypair
 weather!