

Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia
Mayor and Commission
Special Called Session
Tuesday, September 10, 2019
4:33 p.m.
City Hall

The Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia met this date in a special called session. Present: Mayor Girtz; Commissioners Parker, Link, Wright, Denson, NeSmith, Edwards Thornton, and Hamby. Absent: Commissioners Davenport and Herod. Commissioner Thornton came in at 4:38 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss 2020 legislative items; and consider any other item in proper order.

Citizen input

The following citizen input was received.

1. Gordon Rhoden – opposed mandatory registration of firearms
2. Joseph Carter – supported modifications to UGA and USG hiring and changes to HOPE
3. Evelyn Eidell – opposed mandatory registration of firearms
4. Tajata Iger – opposed guns on campus
5. Carrie Steinburg – supported reversal of ban on immigrant driver licenses
6. Richard Winfield – supported increases for lower paid UGA employees
7. Joan Rhoden – opposed mandatory registration of firearms
8. Donna Carter – supported gun rights for resident safety
9. Sujath Iyengar – supported revisions to drivers' license access for non-citizen immigrants
10. Paul Plenovitz - supported revisions to drivers' license access for non-citizen immigrants
11. Audie Lee – supported reversal of ban on immigrant driver licenses and increased gun control
12. Susie Moss - opposed mandatory registration of firearms

A motion was made by Commissioner Denson, seconded by Commissioner Link, to adopt the following additional items for presentation to the local legislative delegation. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Elections and Government Operations

1. **Minimum Compensation for School Board members.** Given the significant budgets and community impacts of public school districts, they should be afforded compensation commensurate with a professional body to attract a strong pool of candidates. A floor of \$15,000/annually would be in line with this.
2. **Reverse the ban on undocumented residents receiving driver's licenses.** As other states recognize, these individuals often drive out of necessity and it would be safer for everyone to have them obtain a driver's license.

Appropriations

3. **Support wage increases for lower-paid University System of Georgia employees** – we ask that our local delegation advocate for this, including by asking for a hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee for SR 291.
4. **Re-establish the income cap on the HOPE scholarship** & invest these savings into enhanced child care & educational programs in low-income & at-risk communities (with the intention that these programs would level the playing field for low-income students & allow more of them to qualify for HOPE).

Public Safety and Criminal Code

5. **Increase gun control measures** in light of the ongoing proliferation of mass shootings across the country. These should include: repeal of Campus Carry, universal background checks, and banning all assault weapons. (Assault weapon: includes automatic/semi-automatic firearms with a detachable magazine, a pistol grip and some other feature such as a vertical forward grip, flash suppressor or barrel shroud)

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.