

MINUTES OF MEETING ON SANDY SPRINGS
CITIZENS AND SOUTHERN BANK BUILDING
10:00 A. M. , JANUARY 4, 1966

Present were:

Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr.	George Ivey, Jr. Sandy Springs
Earl Landers, Administrative Assistant to Mayor	Frank Love, Sandy Springs
Rep. Jack Etheridge, Chairman, Fulton County delegation	Hollis Cobb, Sandy Springs
Milton Farris, Atlanta Board of Aldermen	F. M. (Buddy) Griffin, Sandy Springs
Ferrin Y. Matthews, Office of City Attorney	George Vandernort, Sandy Springs
	Curtis H. Driskell, Atlanta Chamber of Commerce

Introductory remarks by Mayor Allen opened the meeting. He commented on the land area, population density, urban services, special problems and other factors involved in the possible inclusion of the three areas of Sandy Springs -- A, B, and C -- as part of the city. He cited the lower density of population in Areas B and C and said extending certain services to Area C would be particularly expensive to the city.

Sandy Springs representatives expressed the unanimous feeling that the entire area defined as Sandy Springs should be included in any annexation effort if it is to be successful. Inclusion of any less would be short-sighted, they said, for several reasons:

1. About 75 per cent of the area not now developed is already planned for development, and more planning is being done all the time.
2. Population is increasing in Areas B and C at a rate equal to, or ahead of, Area A. Some of the finest new homes are being built in Areas B and C.
3. The Chattahoochee River, which bounds Sandy Springs on the west and north, would serve as a natural boundary and better than an arbitrary line set on another basis.
4. Psychologically, taking part of the area and leaving the rest outside the city would create a "no-man's land" and possibly would damage the community closeness presently felt by Sandy Springs residents. It was brought out that Sandy Springs residents would feel less harmonious with Roswell, where some Sandy Springs children would go to school if only part of the area joined the city.

Discussion of taxes and service charges followed. Mr. Farris suggested that the applicable information on several hundred homes be run through computer machines to arrive at the exact taxes and service charges for these homes if located

in Sandy Springs or if located inside the city limits. He said enough representative examples should be prepared that any Sandy Springs resident could find a case closely similar to his own situation. The idea met enthusiastic approval, and Mr. Farris said he would proceed with it.

Mr. Ivey brought up a number of points of interest or concern to Sandy Springs residents, which he said were the main issues about which citizens had approached him. Each point was discussed in turn, as follows:

-- Tax assessors board -- Could Sandy Springs be offered a representative on the Joint City-County Board of Tax Assessors?

It was agreed that the area, if a part of the city, would actually be better represented on the board, since the board presently has two members from the city and one from the county. Mayor Allen said he didn't think it feasible or possible to name a new member from a specific area.

-- Library board: If Sandy Springs joined the city as a new ward, would the area automatically get a representative on the Library Board?

If a new ward, this would be automatic for one library board member, one school board member and two aldermen. Mayor Allen pointed out, though, that Sandy Springs has only about 24,000 residents, whereas some 500,000 people make up the present eight city wards, an average of about 62,000 per ward. He said some ward realignment probably would be necessary. Mr. Matthews said a proposed annexation act already drawn, at the request of Rep.-elect Rodney Cook, defines Sandy Springs as a new ward and specifically calls for a special election to name two aldermen and one school board member for the ward, to be voted on only by the residents of the area concerned.

-- Zoning and licenses: What would be the effect of the transition to city zoning requirements, and could Sandy Springs be assured representation on the Joint Zoning Board?

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Mayor Allen said the city would carry out a "status quo" position; that is, it would not attempt to alter zoning already ~~approved or business licenses already~~ approved or business licenses already issued. A business license in effect would continue and would come up for renewal as usual, unless the licensee should lose the privilege for cause. Mr. Farris said naming an alderman from a specific area to the Aldermanic Zoning Committee is not done. It was agreed, though, that possibly an understanding could be reached about the appointment of a Sandy Springs resident to the Joint Zoning Board.

-- Police protection and precinct stations: Would the city assure Sandy Springs of a precinct station?

Mr. Farris said two-way radio communications and other modern facilities are doing away with the precinct station concept instead of creating new stations. It

was brought out that Sandy Springs people seem to think a precinct station would increase their protection, and it was agreed that the question is one which should be answered in publicity about the proposed referendum. About six hours of the 24, there are no policemen on duty in Sandy Springs under present arrangements, the mayor was told. Mayor Allen commented on the overall need for additional police protection throughout the city. The city presently has about 1.5 policemen for every 1,000 population, he said, and the rest of the metropolitan area has a much lower ratio.

-- Fire protection: What would happen when Sandy Springs joined the city in the way of new fire stations, etc. ?

Mayor Allen said the Southeastern Underwriters would conduct a survey to determine the needs in Sandy Springs, and their recommendations would have to be followed for Atlanta to maintain its Class III rating. Sandy Springs presently has a Class VI rating. Preliminary investigation by the city shows the need for three new fire stations, one of which would replace the existing station, Mayor Allen said. However, the survey by the Southeastern Underwriters would be controlling. He assured Sandy Springs representatives that the city would not risk loss of its Class III rating.

-- School transportation: Sandy Springs would gain kindergartens in its public schools, but how many school children would lose their school bus transportation ?

Mr. Farris commented that it is apparent the city and county school systems will be consolidated. But he said the Atlanta Transit System could work out a program of bus transportation for the students affected, the same as the company conducts for the City of Atlanta system. Pupils pay to ride these buses.

-- Teacher benefits: Sandy Springs teachers are wondering where they would stand on their retirement programs, etc., if annexation occurs.

Mr. Landers said the Plan of Improvement spells out beyond a doubt that benefits, including retirement, follow an employee from one system to another. It was agreed, however, that this question should be answered for the teachers and that Mr. A. D. Jones of the local school teachers organization would be the logical man to handle that issue.

-- School desegregation: Is any appreciable school desegregation likely to follow annexation ?

About 30 Negro children from Sandy Springs are presently being transported to one school, and there has been no desegregation. All the children live in a rundown section, and most probably would attend the Guy Webb Elementary School, if desegregation occurred.

Mayor Allen said the city system has faced up to its responsibilities and that its policies, already in practice, would be continued throughout the city system.

He said he hoped the matter would not be an issue, but that if it became one, it would be met forthrightly.

-- Sewerage, water and garbage: Sewer service, in particular, is limited at present. Is there any way those residents without sewers, and where no sewers are immediately planned, could be relieved of sewer charges? What would happen with water service and sanitation service?

Mayor Allen said there would definitely be no sewer charges for anyone not using sewers, and there would be none until the service is used. He and Mr. Farris explained the city's revolving fund for sewers, which is used to construct sewers and then replenished by assessments on residents who tap on to the line. Those who don't tap on don't pay a dime.

Water charges (minimum bill) would be cut in half for Sandy Springs residents. This would be mostly a "plus" factor favoring the residents.

Garbage pickup schedules would be improved, rubbish collections added and sanitation charges reduced. It was agreed that the schedule of pickups should be stressed in publicity and particulars spelled out for the homeowner and the commercial user.

-- Streets, sidewalks and street lights: What changes would occur in these areas, particularly sidewalks near schools?

Property owners can petition for sidewalks and be assessed by front footage, the Mayor and Mr. Landers explained, but the city can move in without petition to construct sidewalks and assess property owners, if necessary for safety. The city builds sidewalks in front of schools at city expense.

To meet city standards, about 1,350 lights would be needed on arterial streets and about 2,800 in residential neighborhoods, Mayor Allen said. Some \$9,000 annually is being spent in Sandy Springs now for street lighting; addition of those improvements would jump the cost to about \$181,000 annually after five years.

-- Liquor stores: Sandy Springs presently has only three liquor stores, the maximum possible under county requirements. What would happen because of the difference in county and city requirements?

Mayor Allen said this is a point which should be met with purely business arguments. After some discussion, it was agreed this probably would not be a serious issue in the referendum.

The Mayor asked Mr. Driskell to serve as temporary secretary of the group and to work with Mr. Farris in compiling memoranda on (a) all available data regarding the boundary question and (b) answers to all questions brought up at this meeting, plus others that arise.

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Mayor Allen said he did not want to rush into the boundary question until further study. He said he didn't know whether he could, in good conscience, commit the city to the financial burden attached to including the entire area and requested several days to consider the matter.

After further brief discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Curtis H. Driskell
Acting Secretary