

SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION
July 12, 2010 – 5:30 p.m.

Commission Members:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor
Tamara Cornwell, Vice Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 2
Alan Zirkelbach, Commissioner-at-Large 1 (entered 5:35 pm)
Mary Lancaster, Commissioner, Ward 1
Tambra Varnadore, Ward 2
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

Staff and Others Present:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Rex Hannaford, Deputy Chief of Police
Allen Tusing, Public Works Director
Diane Ponder, Deputy Clerk-Administration

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm, followed by a Moment of Silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Swearing-in of all persons intending to address City Commission or the CRA Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT (non-agenda items): None.

1. CITY COMMISSION AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION: Commissioner Lancaster moved, Commissioner Williams seconded and motion carried 4-0 to approve the July 12, 2010 5:30 p.m. Agenda. Commissioner Zirkelbach was absent for the vote.

Mayor Bryant announced that the City has been awarded the Energy Efficiency sub-grant for \$249,931. A second \$500,000 grant application has been submitted, and if awarded, duplicate items will be removed. The grant proceeds will assist the City in saving approximately \$50,000 in energy costs on an annual basis.

2. 1ST PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE CDBG GRANTS

Commission will accept public comment regarding the City's application for a CDBG Grant up to \$750,000. If awarded, the grant will assist the City in funding the Ward I Phase II infrastructure improvement project. Commission will also accept public comment relating to the City's application for a CDBG Economic Development Grant up to \$750,000 for the 10th Avenue extension from 17th Street to 23rd Street. This public hearing will serve both grants; a second public hearing will be held individually for each grant.

Mayor Bryant opened the public hearing. After no public comment, Mayor Bryant closed the public hearing.

3. APPOINTMENT OF LIEUTENANT RICHARD WELLS AS CHIEF OF POLICE

Mayor Bryant read a statement from Chief Lowe regarding his retirement effective September 3, 2010, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes. She also read into the record her statement regarding her selection of Mr. Wells, which is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes.

Mayor Bryant requested that Commission approve the appointment of Richard Wells at an annual salary equivalent to Chief Lowe's current salary of \$87,568, with a term to run concurrent with her term of office and that of the other department heads.

Mayor Bryant opened the discussion to public comment. The following individuals spoke on the issue:

Joseph Clawson spoke of the type of experience he would like to see a candidate possess.

Pastor Charles Williams, King of King Baptist Church, related his recent conversation with Chief Lowe regarding his decision to retire. They had also discussed his retirement approximately eight months ago.

Webster Hayes, president of the local Southern Christian Leadership and vice president at a state level, applauded Mayor Groover Bryant's choice on a personal level and on behalf of the organization in which he is involved.

Chris Lukowiak expressed concern regarding the nomination process.

Charles Smith applauded the appointment of Mr. Wells. He spoke of past appointments, and the fact a search had never been conducted.

Jean Moreland commended on the past promotions from within the police department, and opined that more than one candidate is necessary.

Dorothy Middleton, Chair of the *Tempo News* Editorial Board, stated the *Tempo News* sanctioned the endorsement of Mr. Wells.

Cynthia Fobbs commented on the crime in the City and asked that Commission put a priority on addressing crime.

Coach Shannon, a Manatee County Distinguished Citizen, supported the appointment of Rick Wells.

Manatee County Deputy Bruce Mead, spoke highly of Mr. Wells on a personal level, opining he will do "very well as the Chief".

Frank Gargett spoke highly of Mr. Wells on a personal level.

Jerry Parrish, who does Gang Prevention in Manatee County, supported the Mayor's decision.

Commissioner Cornwell voiced concern regarding the proposed salary, due to the fact Mr. Wells has no years of service with the City, and it is higher than the salaries of the other department heads. She also voiced concern with the proposed term, opining it should be for one year, and then be reviewed in July, 2011. Commission held a general discussion regarding the issues brought forward by Commissioner Cornwell. In addition, they each voiced their personal opinion on the appointment.

MOTION: Commissioner Lancaster moved, Commissioner Zirkelbach seconded and motion carried 5-0 to approve the appointment of Lieutenant Richard Wells as Chief of Police for the City of Palmetto for a term running concurrent with Mayor Bryant.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Minutes approved: July 19, 2010

James R. Freeman

James R. Freeman
City Clerk