

**CITY COMMISSION MEETING
AUGUST 29, 2011
5:30 PM**

Commission Members Present:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor
Alan Zirkelbach, Vice Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2
Mary Lancaster, Commissioner, Ward 1
Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner, Ward 2
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

Staff Present:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Karen Simpson, Deputy Clerk-Finance
Allen Tusing, Public Works Director
Rick Wells, Chief of Police
Diane Ponder, Deputy Clerk-Administration

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

1. INSTALLATION OF PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) PANELS

Mr. Freeman discussed the proposed zero cost 5-year lease between DCS Energy and the City for the solar panels that will be installed on City building roofs. At the end of the lease the equipment will be donated to the City. The estimated costs to the City per installation site would be structural engineering at \$3,000 - \$4,000 and \$400 for an FPL meter. After a site inspection by DCS, only City Hall and the Police Department qualified for a roof top mount; Mr. Tusing elected not to participate at the Public Works yard for a ground mount system because of the lack of space. The potential energy savings for the City would be \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year.

Attorney Barnebey confirmed he had reviewed the contract and had concerns regarding any potential litigation having to be filed in Connecticut and the City being responsible for any damages to the building's roofs. Mr. Freeman explained that because the contract has been approved by the Department of Treasury (the grant funding agency), any amendments could not be made by the September 1, 2011 deadline for the grant application.

Mr. Freeman stated he has spoken with Manatee County Facilities Manager Darrell Blair, who performed due diligence on the proposed project before Manatee County approved the installation of the panels on 26 of its buildings. Mr. Freeman read an excerpt from a letter from a church in Connecticut regarding its participation in the program, using the same vendor.

Discussion ensued on the particulars of the contract, with Commissioners voicing their individual reasons to support the project or their concerns regarding the project.

MOTION: Commissioner Cornwell moved and Commissioner Zirkelbach seconded to approve and authorize the Mayor to execute two contracts with DataComm Services, LLC dba DCS Energy for the installation of photovoltaic panels at City Hall and the Police Department. The vote on the motion failed 3-2, with Commissioners Lancaster, Varnadore and Williams voting no.

It was consensus of Commission for staff to continue to pursue the concept by looking at different programs and grants that might be available.

Mayor Bryant informed Commission that she and Mrs. Ponder were approached about the possibility of closing 10th Ave. W. for the First Friday on 5th event. Because the application timelines have not been met by the additional businesses, she inquired if Commission would allow the department heads to determine if the closure would be permitted. Attorney Barnebey read Section 19-0176 of the Code, which gives guidelines for approving special function permits if the City Commission is not able to vote or meet prior to the event. Commission agreed to allow the department heads to review the application and follow the established guidelines regarding this application. Mrs. Ponder was instructed to contact the applicant to inform her how to proceed with the application. Commission cautioned that if the event were not on-going, they would not be inclined to set a precedent by suspending established application guidelines.

2. CITY OF PALMETTO FY 2011-2012 BUDGET

Mr. Freeman briefly reviewed the changes that have been made to the budget since the last meeting. Version 4 of the proposed budget presents a balanced budget for General Fund and the Enterprise Funds, some of which have a small surplus. Mr. Freeman stated staff is prepared to move the proposed budget forward for tentative approval on September 12, 2011 and final approval on September 26, 2011.

The only area of discussion centered on the fairs and festivals line item in the CRA budget. It was suggested that a policy be adopted that if funds are not used in one particular event line item, those funds cannot be automatically transferred to another event. Mr. Freeman explained that a customary mid-year reallocation budget resolution was adopted moving unused funds from one event to the July 4th event. He suggested that it may be advantageous to provide Commission with more detailed information during an event's planning stages.

Mr. Freeman confirmed that while the budget contains funds for a water rate study, he has no intentions of pursuing such study without City Commission approval of a contract for that purpose.

Mrs. Simpson informed Commission that one change since Version 4 was prepared has occurred. The vacant dispatcher position has been filled at a step lower than projected in the budget.

Mrs. Simpson confirmed that the salary for the CRA Executive Director was not changed from the previously approved amount. Last year's budget contained approximately eleven months, not a full year.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes approved: September 12, 2011

James R. Freeman

James R. Freeman
City Clerk