

Palmetto City Commission  
May 18, 2009 4:30 p.m.

Elected Officials Present:

Shirley Bryant, Mayor  
Brian Williams, Vice Mayor  
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner  
Mary Lancaster, Commissioner  
Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner  
Alan Zirkelbach, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Mark P. Barnebey, City Attorney  
James R. Freeman, City Clerk  
Garry Lowe, Chief of Police  
Tom McCollum, Interim City Planner  
Allen Tusing, Public Works Director  
Diane Ponder, Deputy Clerk-Administration

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. A moment of silence was observed, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has opened the submittal process for eligible projects for transportation enhancement funding in the amount of \$300,000 per project, to be funded in 2015.

Geoff Seger, Parks & Recreation Director, and Allen Tusing, Director of Public Works reviewed potential sign designs. One component of the proposed project would locate signage at the north and south gateways into the City. Another component could place directional signage at pertinent locations along 8th Avenue or on signal poles in areas that would not support an erected sign.

Commission discussed proposed language the signage could display, such as directions to the historic district and buildings and directions to the businesses that are located off 8th Avenue, the main thoroughfare of the City. There was a difference of opinion among the Commissioners as to how the signage should be used.

The second project proposed to Commission is a safety-related project; asphalt stamping of all the major intersections on 8th Avenue. Staff was asked to also include a pedestrian crosswalk on 8th Avenue between 10th and 17th Streets and on 10th Street at 2nd or 3rd Avenue. Staff was also asked to investigate lighted crosswalks. Mr. Tusing stated that as many crosswalks as possible will be done up to the \$300,000 limit.

It was consensus of Commission to authorize staff to apply for both of the proposed projects.

Commission discussed the need to establish programs and keep components in the programs repaired to continually beautify the City, and to establish a plan of what the City should look like and continue that promotion.

Next, Commission discussed the MPO CMS funds. Mr. Tusing informed Commission that the City lacks two lanes at the 7th Street intersection; a complete through lane south of 7th Street to DeSoto Bridge and a through lane from DeSoto Bridge to 10th Street and the turnoffs at the intersections. He stated first estimates are \$500,000 for the project, but the amount will be finalized before submittal.

He also proposed submitting an application for a pedestrian bridge across US 41 to Lincoln Park, as a result of the community meeting in Ward 1, and concern for the safety of children trying to cross the highway. Discussion ensued on the tunnel that the City has fenced because of safety concerns, with Commissioner Williams suggesting that enhancing the safety of the tunnel should be researched. He did not support the pedestrian bridge.

It was consensus of Commission to authorize staff to apply for both of the CMS funded projects.

## 2. CELL PHONE POLICY

Mr. Freeman briefly discussed the difference between an allowance method of providing employees cell phones vs. a City issue method, noting the pros and cons to both methods. He informed Commission that Verizon, the current holder of the State's cell phone vendor contract, had met with staff (with a representative in attendance at this discussion via telephone) and prepared a cost analysis between the current provider and Verizon. Should the City move to the Verizon state contract, an estimated cost savings of 56% could be realized.

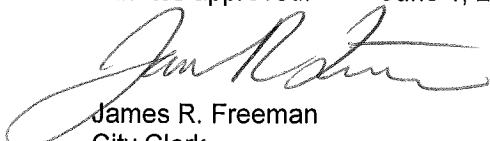
Mr. Freeman stated discussion with Capt. Mayer revealed that he was of the opinion that direct connect capabilities between Palmetto Police and Bradenton and Manatee County was an important consideration. Mr. Freeman also reported that Bradenton confirmed they were audited by the IRS and then went to an allowance method and that the direct connect function is not used city-wide or consistently with other jurisdictions.

In summary, Mr. Freeman suggested that Commission will have to decide if the City should continue providing cell phones to employees and administer that type of program where employees must provide documentation as to the types of calls, or move to an allowance method and report the taxable benefit given to employees.

The topic will be brought back to the June 1, 2009 workshop.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Minutes approved: June 1, 2009



James R. Freeman  
City Clerk