

**CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING
APRIL 2, 2012
4:30 PM**

Elected Officials Present

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor
Brian Williams, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 3
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 1 (entered at 4:40 p.m.)
Charles Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1
Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner, Ward 2

Elected Officials Absent

Alan Zirkelbach, Commissioner-at-Large 2

Staff Present

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jeff Burton, CRA Executive Director
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 4:33 p.m.

1. PRESENTATION: COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Freeman reviewed highlights of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, reporting on major initiatives for the year, major initiatives for the future, and financial data. Mr. Freeman confirmed that the proprietary funds are all positive, but suggested that a rate study should be performed next year because user rates have remained steady since 2009. He commented on the study providing capital to maintain the City's infrastructure. He informed the Commission Stormwater and Road & Bridge still receives a subsidy from General Fund, this year amounting to \$250,000. Staff was asked to determine if a rate study is required to increase rates.

Tomi Bari and Jeff Gearhart, Mauldin & Jenkins, were present. Ms. Bari briefly commented on the recent merger of CPA Associates with Mauldin & Jenkins. Ms. Bari emphasized how prestigious it is to be awarded the Excellence in Financial Reporting award, which the City received again this year. She confirmed that an Unqualified Opinion has been issued for the CAFR.

Ms. Bari also commended the finance team. Mayor Bryant agreed, commenting on the increase in the team's workload.

Mayor Bryant asked that the 7th Street extension discussion be moved forward on the agenda. Commission concurred.

3. DISCUSSION: 7TH STREET EXTENSION

In preparation for the Council of Governments meeting during which 7th Street extension is an agenda item, Mayor Bryant commented on the work the City has completed on this subject. She commented on a proposed route through Estuary Park, which was not possible because of the lack of uplands and the fact the City may have to repay the grant amount that purchased the Park. Numerous discussions have occurred between the City and Manatee County staff regarding the extension. During a discussion with the former secretary of the Department of Transportation, Mayor Bryant was told the light would not be turned on until there is a contract commitment to extend 7th Street, and at the same a widening of the northbound lane, which is required once a certain threshold amount in the DRI approval for Riviera Dunes

is met. She commented on discussions regarding the funding of the hotel and properties that would be needed.

Mr. Tusing displayed a proposed route for the proposed extension crossing through the Civic Center parking lot. Mr. Tusing concurred that additional property to the north of the proposed route is the only property not owned by the City or Manatee County.

Mayor Bryant stressed that she wishes input from FDOT and transportation engineers regarding the project before the City explores any possible direction to resolve the issue.

During the discussion, Commission requested staff collect records on the following subjects:

- Amount expended to date on the installation of the light
- Documentation stating that if the Estuary Park ceases being a Park and 7th Street crosses the Park, the grant funding will have to be repaid
- The year the 7th Street extension was removed from the CIP

Mayor Bryant commented on the City's exploration of crossing Estuary Park. It was determined that it would be cost prohibitive because of the environmental impact on the quality of the wetlands that would be affected. Mr. Tusing stated that the City owns the land, but because it is tidal, the City would have to lease the bottom. Mr. Tusing confirmed that there will be no written documentation prohibiting the construction of the road across the Park; all information regarding the proposal was obtained during discussions.

Mr. Burton confirmed that the Civic Center property was placed in the CRA District in 2011. The larger parcel of property north of the proposed 7th St. extension route is for sale for \$3.9 million. The CRA had the property appraised and it was valued at \$1.7 million. The CRA made an offer to purchase the property, with no success. He agreed with Mr. Tusing that without access the property is not viable for redevelopment. Mr. Burton will have to research to see how the CRA can help Manatee County.

Time permitting, the discussion of the proposed ordinance for portable, temporary and political signs will occur during the 7:00 meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Minutes approved: April 16, 2012

James R. Freeman

James R. Freeman
City Clerk