

CITY OF PALMETTO
CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING
October 7, 2013
4:30 PM

Elected Officials Present:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor
Tambra Varnadore, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 2
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2
Jonathan Davis, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Charles Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

Staff Present:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jeff Burton, CRA Director
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Allen Tusing, Public Works Director
Rick Wells, Chief of Police
Deanna Roberts, Administrative Assistant

Mayor Bryant called the October 7, 2013 workshop meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

1. DISCUSSION: FDEO GRANT PLANNING PROJECT (J. Burton)

Mr. Burton gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Downtown Commercial Core Master Plan. The PowerPoint will be scanned into the meeting date and remain a permanent record.

The City received a \$25,000 grant from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) for the Downtown Commercial Core (DCOMC) Master Plan. Mr. Burton stated this will be the first of multiple meetings regarding this grant project.

The presentation highlighted the CRA funding sources to redevelop downtown. Currently, the biggest investor in the DCOMC is private investors.

The Master Plan addresses key needs in the area: parking, storm water, sewer and architectural design, among others. Architectural guidelines, which are now code, will be reviewed, and an historic preservation document will be written.

The plan will be addressed in three phases. Everything will go through the attorney. Field data will be collected and everything will be mapped.

Due to the Bert Harris Act [Private Property Protection Rights Act], Mr. Burton requested time during workshop meetings for the duration of the task.

The data will give Commission information needed to develop the downtown area. Mr. Burton said when this is completed, he would like to see it added as an amendment to the Comp Plan.

Commissioner Cornwell said Commission needs a true count of parking spaces available; not shared parking spaces. Mr. Burton said public parking will be created similar to 5th Street.

The project will help develop a vision for the downtown. The CRA will continue to seek grants.

Mr. Freeman will see that this is included in all future agendas for updates.

2. MASTER UTILITY ORDINANCE NO. 2013-14

Andrew Burnham, Senior Vice President, Burton & Associates, gave a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation is attached to these minutes and will remain a permanent record. He advised

Commissioners that except for a few adjustments based on their comments, it is essentially the same presentation given at a prior workshop.

The presentation discussed what is driving the rate requirements for the utility system, and the options to address the requirements.

Mr. Burnham said the last time the water rates were adjusted was in 2005 and waste water in 2009. Since that time, the water and sewer rates nationally have gone up 35 percent, just in the past five years.

The biggest challenge to the system is the needed infrastructure system renewals and replacement. The current rates do not provide residual funds for capital reinvestment in the system. Staff has identified about \$10 million in capital improvement requirements. Two options were presented for funding the requirements. Staff recommends Option 1, the lower borrowing alternative.

Mr. Tusing informed Commission that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will come forward in November. The option chosen will provide funding for the CIP.

In answer to Mrs. Varnadore's question, Mr. Tusing said the \$10 million is just to catch up. He said the City will always be paying to upgrade the system.

Mrs. Varnadore asked about the priority of the City's needs. Mr. Tusing said the equalization basin is an important component of the system and needs to be incorporated somewhere in the five-year plan. The City needs somewhere for the water to go during events like we recently experienced, so we don't have to report spillage to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Mr. Tusing remarked that irrespective of where you spend the money, you still need \$10 million to upgrade the system.

Mayor Bryant said the prioritization of the projects will come back to Commission when they review the CIP.

Mr. Tusing explained that the equalization basin helps smooth out the flow to the treatment plant. It can hold water during peak times and send it to the plant at off-peak times.

The discussion was continued to the 7:00 p.m. meeting.

3. ALCOHOL SALES ON CITY PROPERTY ORDINANCE NO. 2013-15

Mr. Barnebey said that at the September 23, 2013 workshop, the City Commission had discussed bringing forward an ordinance revision to allow the sale and consumption of alcohol on City property and streets under certain limited circumstances. Based on discussion, the most appropriate means to control the sale and consumption would be through the Special Function Permit (SFP).

Mr. Barnebey referred to a draft revision that would require an SFP for City functions where alcoholic beverages will be sold on City property. It would also require identification of times and places of sales and require police security. Currently, the City does not need an SFP.

Mayor Bryant informed Commission that the DeSoto Seafood Festival, which prompted this action, had provided the information requested by Commission.

Commissioner Varnadore suggested addressing the ordinance as a whole and not related to this specific item. She said that in conversations with police officers, they had suggested an open container clause in the ordinance. Chief Wells opined it would be easier for officers to enforce if the City had an open container ordinance, which he supports.

Mrs. Varnadore asked for more information about indemnification. She asked if it takes away the City's liability. Mr. Barnebey said it provides an additional layer of protection for the City, but it is only as good as the organization providing indemnification. Insurance and licenses for the event will also help.

Commissioner Smith expressed opposition to an open container ordinance.

Chief Wells said the City of Bradenton and Manatee County have open container laws, and citations are given in most of those cases.

Chief Wells informed Commissioner Smith that it would not apply on private property.

Commissioner Smith declared he was not in favor of changing the ordinance except for the stated purpose of letting non-profits or private businesses with an SFP sell alcohol at their events.

Mr. Barnebey said that requiring indemnification could discourage someone from having an event here, so he encouraged Commission to think about it.

Commissioner Varnadore remarked that alcohol is sold at First Fridays, and people have walked from there down to the Historical Park with their drinks. At some point, the City is going to have to address the open container issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes approved: November 18, 2013

James R. Freeman

James R. Freeman, City Clerk