

CITY OF PALMETTO
CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING
November 18, 2019
4:30 PM

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Deputy Director
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

1. FLAG FOOTBALL PERMIT DISCUSSION

Buddy Smith and Brian Poole, Sr. presented information regarding the proposed flag football program to begin in 2020 for the elementary, middle, and high school youth. Mr. Poole spoke of sponsorship and ways to give to the community. Mr. Smith spoke about the operations of their NFL outreach, specifically a 7-on-7 Program. \$25 entry fee would cover insurance, shirts, and “flags” for each participant. Additional details were submitted and made a part of these minutes. Mr. Smith proposed Lot A would be used for parking, Lot B used for speed and agility training, and Lot C would be the site for two 50-yard playing fields.

The Brian Poole Foundation is only asking the City for a shorter mow on the property, not more frequent. The Foundation would provide portable restrooms, trash pickup, and branded custom fencing to help keep the footballs off the street. Overflow parking would be at the south end of County Fair parking lot. Palmetto High School students could find approved community service hours helping with training, manning the crosswalks, literacy tutoring, and more.

Each of the Commission offered their support. Questions included hours, scholarships for families that could not afford the \$25 entry, parking at the fairground, and safety. Mayor Bryant suggested the City waive the fees for the park rental and Gateway sign, with no audible objection.

2. RESOLUTION 2019-43 MANATEE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS PROJECT (J. Freeman)

Ritesh Patel on behalf of Manatee School for the Arts (MSA) discussed the revised project and conduit debt schedule. On September 9, 2019 the City approved Res. 2019-29. School later learned of bank financing instead of publicly offered bonds. The school and its Board decided the bank financing was the best opportunity for MSA. The new Res. 2019-43, repeals 2019-29, refinances City debt on behalf of the school, terminates interest rate swaps, provides approx. \$8 million for roof over and new high school building. Res. 2019-43 would still have no impact on the City for borrowing, also no liability for the City if MSA should default. The school anticipates funding and closing mid-December 2019.

Commissioner Williams opined the MSA ad in the paper was misleading. He clarified the loan is not coming from the City. Attorney Barnebey stated the language is standard. Original Resolution financing was a bond, and the City was only the conduit. Mr. Freeman reiterated the City has no financial liability.

3. CSX PROPERTY PURCHASE DISCUSSION (S. Tyler/J. Freeman)

Commission approved the Police Department master plan August 5, 2019 placing the building on the northeast corner of the former school property. The neighboring 5 acres could be purchased from CSX Railroad for \$650,000, including roadway. The City received an appraisal of \$630,000 for the parcel without the trail. CSX not willing to split the property.

Chief Tyler offered two options. Option 1- proceed with original approval, PD in NE corner, and move to buy CSX parcel. Chief Tyler listed advantages and disadvantages. Option 2- relocating the PD site to the SE corner of the property, and then the NE corner is available for redevelopment. With either option, the CSX road issue still needs to be resolved.

Mr. Freeman discussed the \$9.1 million project budget which includes construction and related items to build Police Department, but does not include land costs. CSX land purchase would be outside this budget. Mr. Freeman reviewed funding sources, including \$6.3 million already approved from ½ cent sales tax.

A decision is needed from Commission. Currently, architects are on hold, but still planning to break ground late summer/ early fall 2020, and approximately a year for construction.

Commissioner Smith asked how much money has already been spent. Mr. Freeman responded \$1.45 million was spent purchasing the land in 2018, remembering the City is planning to resell a portion of the property. Funds have been spent for an appraisal and environmental testing. Additional billing has not been received to date. Beginning in 2018, \$8.2 million was the earliest estimate for the new police department.

Commissioner Williams had environmental concerns with the CSX property. Attorney Barnebey had concerns about the contract and quit claim deed. Mr. Williams asked staff to get an appraisal on the south parcels to find the value of the remaining property.

Commissioner Davis opined the City needs to clear up the road ownership issue, regardless of where we build. Mayor Bryant added the trail portion of the CSX property would not be included.

Commissioner Cornwell asked a list of questions about new designs, new exits and entrances, number of levels in the new building, and staff recommendations. Chief Tyler praised the current 22,000 sq. ft. design. He stated a two-story building dramatically increases construction costs. He is confident the entrances and exits would be fine for either option.

Commissioner Varnadore held her comments in the interest of time, but wanted to have further discussion at the 7:00 p.m. meeting.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: December 16, 2019

Jim Freeman

JAMES R. FREEMAN
CITY CLERK