

CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING

August 16, 2021

5:30 pm

This Commission Meeting was conducted utilizing Communications Media Technology. Some Staff members were present in the Commission Chambers while others were present via the Zoom application to respect the social distancing guidelines.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor

Brian Williams, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 3

Sheldon Jones, Commissioner-at-Large 1

Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1

Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner, Ward 2

Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2 (Via telephone into Zoom Meeting at 5:46 p.m.)

STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney

Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director

Scott Tyler, Chief of Police

Jim Freeman, City Clerk

Cheryl Miller, Finance Director

Jeff Burton, CRA Director

Xaiver Colon, Assistant CRA Director

Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

Vanessa Cochran, Assistant City Clerk

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. She informed the Board that Palmetto High School Tiger Fest event was postponed due to rain and rescheduled advertising on the Electronic Gateway Sign from August 14th to August 21st.

1. 2021-2022 COMMUNITY POLICING INNOVATION PLAN (S. Tyler)

Mayor Bryant informed the Board that the 2021-2022 Community Policing Innovation Plan requires more work and will be rescheduled for the next Workshop Meeting.

2. FY 2022 BUDGET DISCUSSION (J. Freeman)

Mr. Freeman, City Clerk, gave a presentation on Version 1 of the fiscal year 2021-2022 City budget. He reported that there were no significant changes to Version 1, and Version 2 will be distributed in a few weeks, and the salary consultant will present the results of the study at the next Workshop meeting. In regards to the State mandate of \$15 per hour for entry level positions by the year 2026, the City is aiming to accelerate this task within 2 years. Starting October 1st, the City is proposing that all entry jobs start at \$14 and \$15 next year. Next, he recapped the scheduled budget meetings dates and welcomed comments from the Board.

EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION ON SALARY STUDY

Commissioner Jones inquired about the current employees getting paid \$15 and the vacant positions.

Commission Workshop Meeting

August 16, 2021

Page 2 of 3

Mr. Freeman explained that there will be some adjustments for all the positions based on what the market and the study determines. And, the vacant positions listed are budgeted, so they can be filled.

Commissioner Smith requested clarification on the percent increase for positions, and why employees are leaving the City. Mr. Freeman summarized what the consultant will review, and why some positions may receive more based on results of the study. Next, Mr. Rayan, Public Works Director, responded to the vacant positions in the Public Works Department and stated that some agencies are offering more pay.

Commissioner Williams asked what can be done regarding the pay increase without raising taxes with limited funds. Mr. Freeman commented that he is not sure that we need to do anything beyond the current amount budgeted until the consultant completes the review and makes the recommendations.

Commissioner Smith inquired about how many City employees are working in the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and if Public Works employees can assist the CRA. Mr. Burton, CRA Director, replied 7 police officers are funded through the CRA. And, if the Board wants City Public Works employees to assist with CRA projects, the CRA Plan will have to be amended to include it. Attorney Barnebey added that it has to be enhanced above what the employees normally will do for the City in the CRA Plan.

Commissioner Jones questioned the Waste Management contract and the limited number of employees doing the work. Mr. Rayan expressed that Waste Management's situation is similar to the City with other agencies offering more pay. And, Commissioner Williams added that Covid also has caused Waste Management setbacks that trickles down to the City, however, he believes that the problems can be resolved. Mayor Bryant agreed with Commissioner Williams regarding Covid has caused Waste Management's dilemmas. Mr. Rayan added that he met with Waste Management, and they were informed that rebates or refunds on the weeks that trash is not picked up will apply and gave them a probationary period to fix the problem. Commissioner Smith requested a copy of the Waste Management contract be provided to the Board after the meeting.

3. HIDDEN LAKE PARK CELL TOWER EXTENSION REQUEST (J. Freeman)

Mr. Freeman, City Clerk, recapped briefly the extension request proposal, the industry data, and the Board's concerns. He provided a spread sheet that listed the income the City would receive, and the spread sheet is a part of the minutes. After providing the Board with the results, Mr. Freeman requested direction on how to proceed.

The Board presented the below questions and comments:

- Negotiate for more money.
- Amount of equipment involved for an additional carrier.
- Residents' concerns about the high frequency waves generated from the cell tower.
- Hiring a consultant may be necessary to answer the Board's questions.

The Board made reference to their comments and agreed that Mr. Freeman collect the information and present it at the next Workshop Meeting.

Commission Workshop Meeting

August 16, 2021

Page 3 of 3

4. NEW CINGULAR WIRELESS PCS, LLC OPTION AND LAND LEASE AGREEMENT AT HIDDEN LAKE PARK (J. Freeman)

The Board agreed that Mr. Freeman bring the item back at the next Workshop Meeting.

Mayor Bryant inquired about the initial phase of the 23rd Street Project. Mr. Rayan, Public Works Director, declared that Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is waiting for a start date from Manatee County Operations Office, and he will keep the Board updated.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: SEPTEMBER 27, 2021

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK