

CITY COMMISSION/CRA WORKSHOP MEETING
AUGUST 22, 2022
4:30 P.M.

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
Tambra Varnadore, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 2 (joined the meeting at 4:32pm)
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2 (joined the meeting at 4:34 pm)
Sheldon Jones, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Xavier Colon, Interim CRA Director
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

Mayor Bryant opened the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

1. EMPLOYEE OF THE 3RD QUARTER

Mayor Bryant introduced the nominees of the 3rd quarter which included, Detective James Carr II, Don Barjas, and Penny Johnston. The winner of the 3rd quarter was Penny Johnston. A letter was read into the record highlighting Penny's contributions to the City.

2. VEOLIA CONTRACT ADDENDUM (M. RAYAN)

Mr. Rayan discussed the Veolia Contract Addendum, which was attached to the Agenda. Their contract is up for renewal and Mr. Rayan is also requesting additional work be fulfilled by them due to lack of City staff. He highlighted the tasks that will be done by Veolia in the future if the addendum is passed. Devin Bloome, Project Manager, and Michael Coon, Vice President, were in attendance.

Commissioner Williams discussed the fee schedule on page 6 of the contract. Mr. Rayan highlighted the residual balance that will be owed if they end their relationship early. The outlay is being spread over a 4 year period. Commissioner Williams opined that the nearly \$600,000 seemed very high. Mr. Rayan detailed what all that would entail.

City Commission/CRA Workshop Meeting

August 22, 2022

Page 2 of 4

Commissioner Jones questioned how many employees normally take care of these tasks. Mr. Rayan responded that it would be about 5-6 individuals. He went on to note that he currently does not have any employees to do these tasks. Commissioner Jones asked why we cannot get 5 employees to do this job, yet Veolia can. Mr. Rayan responded that Veolia pays more the City does. Commissioner Jones believes we need to raise our rates to be able to hire our own employees. Mr. Rayan stated that the private sector has more resources than we do. Commissioner Jones is concerned that we are contracting too many things out, and we will not have jobs within the City if this continues. He thinks we need to start looking at the top to figure out why we aren't able to get employees. He wants the first contract to stay as is, but he wants the Amendment to be a separate contract, so he can look closer at the numbers that are being proposed. Mr. Rayan clarified that the Amendment is a stand-alone document.

Commissioner Cornwell stated that when you are looking at an employee, you have to look at the whole benefit package. If we're using Veolia, we don't have to do that. She questioned if every City resident has a backflow prevention device. Mr. Rayan responded that they do. Commissioner Cornwell continued to discuss and ask for clarification on the replaceable backflow device and the term 'owner' in the attached contract. Commissioner Cornwell questioned the size of the back flows as mentioned on page 2 of the document.

Commissioner Varnadore stated that we have always had a great relationship with Veolia. She believes we need to move forward with this contract at this time. She believes because of the timing, we need to move forward, and in the future we can work towards having all in house employees.

Commissioner Smith agreed with Commissioner Jones. He believed Mr. Rayan inherited this contract. Commissioner Smith asked Mr. Rayan that if he had the employees, could they run the system. Mr. Rayan responded that they could, but he's not sure the City wants to run the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Commissioner Smith believes we need to pay people to do the work, the same as the other companies. Commissioner Smith wants them to work on getting more employees over the next 2 years. He wants to workshop the discussion of getting more employees.

Commissioner Williams questioned when the current contract with Veolia ends. Mr. Rayan responded it ends December 31st, 2022. Commissioner Williams then questioned if they have received the report of performance as they are supposed to 180 days prior to the end of their contract. Mr. Ryan answered that he has not received it. Commissioner Williams believes that every time they point fingers at the staff, there are 3 fingers pointing back at the Commission. He wants the Commission to take a closer look at the budget and find more ways to manage the funds. He believes they are shortchanging themselves when the departments are making cuts without presenting those hardships to the Commission.

Commissioner Jones asked Michael Coon, Vice President of Operations, to come to the podium for questions. He asked if a person who quits the City can work for Veolia. Mr. Coon responded that it is possible that they could work for them, but he cannot guarantee that he would pay them more. They try to pay competitively, but they must be qualified. They pay key to the geography. Commissioner Jones questioned how many employees he plans to assign to this amendment. Mr. Coon responded that he plans to have 5 employees fulfill this contract.

Mayor Bryant mentioned that Manatee County and the City of Bradenton are lacking employees as well. She also mentioned the reasoning behind outsourcing some of these services. She would like Mr. Freeman to get the numbers from neighboring municipalities job openings.

Commissioner Cornwell highlighted the help Veolia provided to the City years ago when a hurricane came through our area. Without their help, we would not have had the needed equipment.

City Commission/CRA Workshop Meeting

August 22, 2022

Page 3 of 4

Commissioner Williams also discussed the great relationship they have had over the years with Veolia.

Mr. Barnebey wanted to draw attention to the document that was handed out to the Commissioners with updated figures on page 6. This has been included in the record.

3. WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT PROPERTY PURCHASE (M. RAYAN)

Mr. Rayan gave a brief background regarding the land east of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The couple of parcels, totaling 6.4 acres, appraised for \$615,000. The land acquisition funds were approved by Commission through the ARPA Plan. Mr. Rayan negotiated a price of \$600,000 with the landowner. Attached to the Agenda is a draft contract. The landowner and his lawyer are discussing the contract and clarifying a few points. Mr. Rayan is asking the Commission to approve the purchase, so he can move forward. He said the land is strategically placed if they need to expand the WWTP.

Mr. Barnebey noted the language should include "subject to the City Attorney's final approval". He does not anticipate any problems.

Commissioner Varnadore stated that we have been negotiating with this property owner for many years. She recommended moving forward as well. Mr. Rayan responded that Environmental Assessments will be done. Commissioner Varnadore expressed that her only concern would be that we could not use the land for what we wanted to. She does not believe that will be the case, because using the pond alone would be worth the price. Mr. Barnebey stated that what would concern him was if we got into ground water and the Aquaphor, otherwise it would be unlikely that we could not use the property for what we intend it for. Mr. Barnebey said he expects certain things will need to be cleaned up. However, you just do not know what you will find until you get a phase 1 and phase 2 environmental assessment done.

Commissioner Smith asked Mr. Barnebey if the Environmental Assessment phase 1 and phase 2 will be back before they complete the sale. Mr. Barnebey responded yes; they can provide that to the Commission. Commissioner Smith then asked what the property has been used for. Mr. Barnebey answered that it has been a nursery for years, but he is unsure of what it was prior to that.

4. CRA PROPERTY MAP FOR DISCUSSION (X. COLON)

Mr. Colon reminded the Board that they asked for a map of all CRA and City owned properties at a prior meeting. The two of main concern are the Riverside and Slicks properties. The condition of those lots are the concern regarding City code for parking.

Commissioner Varnadore said it would have been helpful to have a point paper to accompany the map. She also asked for a full map with a legend so she can see it. She would like to have a hard colored copy. She asked what his suggestions were. Mr. Colon stated that this is a City Ordinance issue. Commissioner Varnadore also requested to have addresses provided with the map.

Commissioner Jones stated that he also did not know what they were doing with the map. He would have liked to have a point paper as well.

City Commission/CRA Workshop Meeting

August 22, 2022

Page 4 of 4

Commissioner Williams stated that the Commissioners could have called, texted, or emailed for clarification.

5. ORDINANCE 2022-02 VACATION RENTALS (J.FREEMAN/M.BARNEBEY)

This item was not discussed due to timing.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 6:01 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

JAMES R. FREEMAN

JAMES R. FREEMAN
CITY CLERK