

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION/CRA WORKSHOP MEETING
MAY 15, 2023
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.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor
Sheldon Jones, Vice-Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2 (Joined the meeting at 4:35 pm)
Sunshine Mathews, Commissioner, Ward 2 (present via ZOOM)
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Edward Johnson, Interim CRA Director
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police
Cheryl Miller, Finance Director
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant
Jenny Silverio, CRA Administrative/Compliance Coordinator

STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

Mayor Bryant opened the meeting at 4:30 pm.

1. **EMPLOYEE OF THE 2ND QUARTER**

Mayor Bryant presented Jenith Silverio, the Employee of the 2nd Quarter.

2. **FY 2022 ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT (ACFR) OVERVIEW (C.MILLER/J.FREEMAN)**

Cheryl Miller, Finance Director, presented a PowerPoint highlighting the Auditors report. The PowerPoint was included in the minutes. This was the 17th consecutive year receiving the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

Daniel Anderson, Mauldin & Jenkins, reviewed the audit report, which was also included in the minutes. The Auditors issued an unmodified audit report, which is the highest form of assurance they can render.

Mr. Freeman thanked the Finance Department for all the hard work they do.

3. PALMETTO SPORTS COMPLEX- 14TH AVE WEST & 9TH ST WEST (E.JOHNSON)

Mr. Johnson, Interim CRA Director, gave a background of the item, and recapped previous discussions that have occurred related to the project. He read the requested motions that are on the Agenda for the 7:00 pm meeting for approval on both the City Commission Meeting and the Special CRA Board Meeting. This has been discussed at least 7 different times at previous meetings and he was hoping for movement forward with this project.

Commissioner Williams questioned the ease of transition between tennis and pickle ball courts. He also questioned the open play area and what might go there.

Commissioner Smith questioned the size of the open play area. He also asked if the CRA would be handling this project. Mr. Johnson answered no, it is not in the CRA. This is a City of Palmetto venture. Mr. Johnson explained the only costs to the CRA would be the removal of the current courts in Lamb Park and re-greening the area as part of the Women's Club project. Commissioner Smith questioned who currently maintains that site. It was answered that it is maintained by the City.

Commissioner Jones questioned funding and how much this project will cost. He opined that they can't tear down the existing basketball courts at Lamb Park unless they already have the new courts in place. He questioned how long this project would take to complete. Mr. Johnson stated they won't move forward with the destruction of the current courts, until there is relocation of new courts. The CRA wants them to make a decision. The Commissioners need to direct City staff to come up with a plan to build up the area.

Commissioner Cornwell stated there are several outreach grants to build parks, especially for youth recreation. She wants to look at those opportunities through the City. She questioned if the open play area was big enough for a softball or t-ball field. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Rayan responded that it is hard to determine without exact measurements. She mentioned possibly a splash pad/park for that open play area. Mr. Rayan reiterated they need to make a decision if they want to use this space, then they can look at the funding and conceptals.

Commissioner Smith questioned the tennis courts they have across the street. It was answered that they are a County facility. He questioned if they could put the design that was presented to them in that space. Mr. Johnson responded that the conceptual that is presented, can be put there. Commissioner Smith said the location is kind of far away from where the younger people play basketball and live. Mr. Johnson responded that they need direction to move forward, and then they can research funding and the best uses for the site. Commissioner Smith said he believed they talked about it being a cemetery overflow at one point.

Mayor Bryant questioned what he is referring to with the overflow of the cemetery. Mayor Bryant stated that there was no restriction put on the property.

Mr. Freeman recapped the history of this discussion and the potential process for the project moving forward.

Mayor Bryant reminded the Commissioners that there was concern with Lamb and Sutton parks with the potential noise complaints. She believed this is centered well between different parks. She stated that they have

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kicked this down the road many times. She opined that they don't want to spend time getting grants if the Commissioners don't want to use this property.

Commissioner Jones said he would like to just make it a pickleball court instead of a tennis court. He suggested using one of the allotted tennis court spaces for a playground. He would like to see that concept.

Commissioner Williams liked having it in this area. The proximity between Just for Girls, the Boys Club, and Palmetto Elementary was ideal. They could bring kids over to these facilities. He recalls the cemetery issue, as it was discussed when they were looking into the flag football going in there and he thought the City Attorney said there were no restrictions on the property at that time. Commissioner Williams also opined that two courts are needed. He wants them to make a decision at tonight's meeting. He is in favor of moving forward.

Commissioner Cornwell discussed the average ages of people who enjoy playing pickleball. She agreed they need to decide where they want to move forward with these courts' placement.

Commissioner Mathews really liked this location. She liked the idea of looking into grants, but right now they just need to decide on the location moving forward. The Yacht Club has tennis courts, along with pickleball courts. It is effective to use both. She mentioned Palmetto Charter school has a pickleball team. There are opportunities for all ages to use these. Soccer, t-ball and flag football were ideas she mentioned to use in the open play area. She also liked the track going around the site.

Commissioner Smith agreed with them putting courts here. He just doesn't agree with the basketball courts being by the pickleball courts. He spoke again about the ages of people who play pickleball. He discussed possibly moving the basketball courts in the other corner and putting the open play area in between. He doesn't think the language that is used on basketball courts would be conducive with the groups that play pickleball.

Commissioner Jones asked if the plans are changeable. Mayor Bryant responded yes, they can look into exact renderings and grants as they move forward. She wants them to move forward with a decision on the location. He believed they had a consensus to move forward. It's just the details that need to be worked out. Mr. Rayan reiterated that this is just a conceptual, the details will be discussed further.

Commissioner Smith opined that the Boys Club wouldn't use these courts. They already have their own courts. He wanted Mr. Barnebey to bring back the documents proving the site wasn't restricted for a future cemetery so he could make his vote.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 5:37 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: JUNE 5, 2023

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK