



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes City Commission Workshop

CITY COMMISSIONERS

Jacqueline Moore, Mayor
Rhonda Y. DiFranco, Vice-Mayor
Cheryl Cook, Commissioner
Tom Jones, Commissioner
Linda M. Yates, Commissioner

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Jonathan R. Lewis, City Manager
Mark Moriarty, City Attorney
Patsy Adkins, Interim City Clerk

Thursday, July 28, 2016

9:00 AM

CITY HALL ROOM 244

Commission Budget Workshop

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The North Port City Commission Budget Workshop was called to order at 9:00 a.m. in Meeting/Training Room 244 by Mayor Moore.

Present: Mayor Moore; Vice-Mayor DiFranco; Commissioners Cook, Jones and Yates; City Manager Lewis; Assistant City Manager Schult; Assistant City Attorney Slayton; City Clerk Adkins; Recording Secretary Hale and Police Chief Vespia.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – COMMISSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Yates, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Cook, Mayor Moore, Commissioner Yates, Vice-Mayor DiFranco and Commissioner Jones

A. [16-0421](#) City Manager Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2017

City Manager Lewis provided an overview of the Budget process. Thereafter, Finance Director Lear provided a PowerPoint review of the budget process with the proposed results through a PowerPoint presentation. The proposed Millage Rate is 3.5402 and represents a decrease from last year's adopted millage rate of 3.5974. The City's Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2016-17 is \$126,834,530.

City Manager Lewis summarized the following issues: (1) the Budget reflects a slightly reduced millage rate; (2) the Fire District Assessment Rate reflects not only a reduction rate for this year, but a reimbursement from an error in last year's Assessment; (3) there is a 3.5% increase in the Road & Drainage District Assessment; and (4) there is no change in the proposed Budget for the Solid Waste District; (5) the health insurance issue has a potential significant increase in expenditure based on the Commission's direction to re-address carriers. The issue is set for discussion at the August 16, 2016 meeting; (6) the construction bid estimates for Fire Station #85 came in higher than

expected and funding sources will be addressed when the Contract is completed.

Questions and discussion ensued: (1) clarification was provided that the Florida Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program was approved at the July 26, 2016 Commission Regular Meeting and City Manager Lewis stated at that time that SLA 17-0600 for the Housing Program was scheduled for discussion at today's Budget Workshop Meeting; (2) SLA 17-2755 Impinging Growth, is to fund the cost of contracted services to remove impinging growth along property lines between neighbors and no additional City equipment will be needed or purchased. If the Commission approves an Ordinance change to only place a lien on the property with no cutting, then the funding would no longer be required; (3) City Manager Lewis explained, and Assistant City Attorney Slayton generally agreed, that the Woodlands landscape situation is similar to a private property impinging growth condition but the significant difference centers in the question of whether the City may place a lien and collect on another governmental entity; (4) any policy changes will be fully vetted by staff and Commission to insure any proposed legislation is done correctly and legally; (5) stating Florida Statutes, Assistant City Attorney Slayton clarified that in addition to any other law that may exist to remedy the situation, there are provisions in Florida Statutes that apply specifically to Community Development Districts (CDDs) that provide CDD residents mechanisms to dissolve the entity.

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT ON SUMTER

There was a general agreement to eliminate the Sumter Boulevard Fitness Equipment project as a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) with Vice-Mayor DiFranco dissenting.

POINSETTIA PARADE AND FESTIVAL

Discussion ensued regarding: (1) changing the parade route; (2) sending the event to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (with input from the Parks & Recreation staff, law enforcement, and Fire Rescue) for an in-depth review of options for the Parade, and clarifying that this is a priority responsibility for the Advisory Board; (3) there is no financial impact on the Budget; (4) City Manager Lewis stated that the City does not have the staff resources to hold the Parade and the Festival/Tree Lighting events on the same date.

There was a consensus to keep the Christmas Festival and Tree Lighting as one event at the City Hall Complex but hold it on a different day than the Poinsettia Parade. The Parade route will revert to the more traditional route (starting at Appomattox Drive); will be shortened by approximately 900-feet; and will end at Dallas White Park.

SOFTWARE FOR PUBLIC RECORDS ACCESS

Following a concern, City Manager Lewis stated that the City is highly transparent and City Clerk Adkins stated that the City Clerk's Department is constantly looking for ways to increase access to information on the City's website and is reviewing additional software to access records online. No further action was requested for this item.

THE TREE FUND

Discussion ensued: (1) it was suggested that adding funds may help change the behavior of developers to move away from clear-cutting to a more balanced approach; (2) Vice-Mayor DiFranco stated that changing the Tree Fund program is a policy issue, not a budget issue, and should be discussed in a Workshop setting; (3) City Manager Lewis: [a] named some options of where the additional funds may be obtained within the Budget and then moved into the Tree Fund to be expended from there; or [c] explained that funds could be expended directly from the General Fund if directed by the Commission; (4) after Commissioner Cook voiced concern that this expanded program should not be funded by taxpayers and will not dilute the Tree Mitigation Program; (5) City Manager Lewis stated the scope and nature of the funding has not been determined; (6) Commissioner Jones did not support adding monetary resources

from the General Fund to the Tree Mitigation Program; (7) Commissioner Yates clarified that her comments were not in reference to taking money from the General Fund or from taxpayers, but using funds already in the Tree Mitigation Fund.

Following a request, a consensus failed to change the Tree Fund program, adding additional funds from another source, with Vice-Mayor DiFranco, Commissioner Cook and Commissioner Jones dissenting.

Recess 10:23 a.m. -- 10:37 a.m.

THE YMCA POOL CLOSING/DEMOLITION

City Manager Lewis reported that the City is working with the Sarasota County Health Department and the YMCA to keep the pool operational, but due to Health Department concerns, it could be closed tomorrow, next month, or six months from now.

Discussion ensued: (1) City Manager Lewis stated that the \$2.3 million funding level in the CIP for the pool is based on conversations with the Charlotte YMCA and other pools, for demolition of the old pool, and constructing an eight-lane pool at the current YMCA location; (2) following a concern, City Manager Lewis reiterated that this proposal is for a new re-constructed pool at Dallas White Park; (3) Commissioner Yates voiced concern that this proposal does not reflect the last Commission conversation for a 50-meter pool at a location to be determined and suggested that the CIP be revised to reflect a more general direction; (4) City Manager Lewis recollected that the Commission requested staff to provide the information on what we had, costs, etc. The material was resent to the Commission within a few days after that meeting; (5) Vice-Mayor DiFranco favored the present proposal for the 25-meter pool at the YMCA and to have another discussion regarding the 50-meter pool at the Morgan Center location and leave that up to the people to decide. She did not favor two 50-meter pools at two locations; (6) it was stated that the second, bigger pool should be decided by the people; (7) Commissioner Yates articulated that Sarasota County has access to funding and is willing to help with getting a 50-meter pool but not a 25-meter pool; (8) Commissioner Cook voiced concern that we have no promise from Sarasota County regarding funding help for the pool and at the last budget meeting three Commissioners favored moving forward with rebuilding the YMCA pool; (9) Vice-Mayor DiFranco suggested to pull this item out, hold the funds to the side until after the September Joint Meeting with Sarasota County and discuss it further next year; (10) Commissioner Cook favored moving forward with replacing the 25-meter YMCA plan, and to give the people their pool because it is funded. Anything other decision needs to go to the people.

There was a general agreement to hold the funds as stated by Vice-Mayor DiFranco. Commissioner Cook dissented for reasons stated.

City Manager Lewis requested a plan by the end of October and the Commission agreed.

CONCRETE CHESS TABLES AT VETERANS PARK

Discussion ensued: (1) three tables were proposed; (2) the proposed location at Veterans Park is right next to the Public Library. No further action was requested on this item.

HOUSING PROGRAM

Discussion ensued: (1) Commissioner Yates suggested not to label the \$50,000 budgeted allocation as "cash" for that program and to include it in the Non-Departmental Budget where the funding may be allocated at the Commission's discretion; (2) City Manager Lewis clarified that the Commission determines the amount to be granted; (3) Commissioner Cook did not support funding the Housing Program, or moving the funds to a non-descript account because the people need to know where their money is going.

There was a general agreement to leave SLA 17-0600 Housing Program funding alone in its designated department budget. Commissioner Yates and Commissioner Cook dissented.

IMPINGING GROWTH ALONG PROPERTY LINES BETWEEN NEIGHBORS SLA 17-2755

Following a brief discussion, City Manager Lewis stated that staff will review comparable data regarding the types of citations and potential revenue from infractions and liens, from when this was an enforceable action years ago.

ATWATER PARK SPLASH PAD

Discussion ensued: (1) it was requested to expand the hours of operation to seven days a week, all year round; (2) operational information was cited concerning other splash pad facilities in other cities. Public comment was held.

There was a general agreement to modify the Atwater Splash Pad hours, opening daily at 9:00 a.m. and closing at 9:00 p.m.; operating year-round. Commissioner Jones dissented but did not provide a reason.

City Manager will create an SLA for budgetary purposes

CITY ATTORNEY BUDGET

Professional Services

Following a request by Commissioner Yates that the \$175,000 for Professional Services be reduced by \$25,000, Vice-Mayor DiFranco, and Commissioners Cook and Jones disagreed. Mayor Moore did not voice an opinion.

Executive Salaries

Finance Director Lear clarified that the amount in the City Attorney's Budget Analysis salary of \$149,250 for Fiscal Year 2015-16 represents how much he is paid based on the timing of payrolls. His actual current salary is \$153,511 and with no changes in salary, that amount will increase due to when his previous raises became effective. Therefore, the Proposed Fiscal Year amount is correct at \$153,870. Following a brief discussion, no further action was requested on this item.

THE MILLAGE RATE

After noting that SLA 17-0600 (the Housing Program) and SLA 17-2755 (Impinging Growth) will be funded by increasing the millage rate to 3.5402, an alternative was proposed to take the funding from the \$1.3 million in the General Fund, Reserve Fund Balance or make reductions in other areas, and maintain the millage rate of 3.4612. It was stated that this would be a one-time expenditure in this budget and will keep the reserve balance between 15% and 25%.

Discussion ensued: (1) after an inquiry, it was reported that the implementation of a 3.4612 millage rate will not have any effect on the City's on-going road maintenance program; (2) City Manager Lewis stated that one of the Commission's Strategic Priorities was to work down the Reserve Fund Balance but in this case, he recommended moving other one-time expenditures from the Reserve Fund Balance rather than removing the two SLAs which will be recurring expenses; (3) Commissioner Cook and Commissioner Jones: [a] disagreed with taking a recurring expense out of the Reserve Fund Balance; [b] voiced concern that final costs for Insurance premiums and funding for the YMCA pool have yet to be assigned a budget, and may cause additional expenses in the City budget; and [c] expressed concern that the Reserve Fund is being depleted; (4) Mayor Moore and Vice-Mayor DiFranco also disagreed and would only support the City Manager's proposed millage rate; (5) City Manager Lewis stated the millage rate can only be reduced by making other cuts from the budget or taking

funding from reserves.

CIGNA INSURANCE COSTS

Following a question, City Manager Lewis reported that the cost to keep CIGNA as the City's health insurance carrier, based on the same plan structure, would require an additional \$356,837; and that does not include the employees' premium amount.

SUMMARY

A recap of the Commission budget changes by City Manager Lewis included: (1) the description of the YMCA pool; (2) removal of the fitness equipment on Sumter Boulevard; (3) revisions in the Splash Pad hours of operation and days open during the year; (4) giving direction to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board to review the larger context of the Poinsettia Parade while shortening and reversing the route factor from last year for this year's parade.

Following a request, a consensus failed to set the millage rate at 3.4612 and search for ways make up the \$250,000 elsewhere. Mayor Moore, Vice-Mayor DiFranco, Commissioner Cook and Commissioner Jones dissented.

There was a general agreement to stay with City Manager's proposed 3.5402 millage rate. Commissioner Yates dissented.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Moore adjourned the North Port City Commission Budget Workshop at 12:18 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Jacqueline Moore, Mayor

Attest: _____
Patsy C. Adkins, MMC, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the City Commission Regular Meeting this ____ day of _____, 2016.