



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Commission Workshop

CITY COMMISSIONERS

Debbie McDowell, Mayor

Jill Luke, Vice Mayor

Christopher Hanks, Commissioner

Pete Emrich, Commissioner

Vanessa Carusone, Commissioner

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Peter Lear, City Manager

Amber L. Slayton, City Attorney

Heather Taylor, City Clerk

Tuesday, June 16, 2020

9:00 AM

City Commission Chambers

Budget

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McDowell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Mayor Debbie McDowell, Vice Mayor Jill Luke, Commissioner Christopher Hanks, Commissioner Vanessa Carusone and Commissioner Pete Emrich

Also Present:

City Manager Peter Lear, City Attorney Amber Slayton, City Clerk Heather Taylor, Recording Secretary Susan Hale, Administrative Services Specialist Laura Reed, Finance Director Kimberly Ferrell, Budget Administrator Lisa Herrmann, Fire Chief Scott Titus, Training Officer Nicholas Herlihy, Human Resource Director Christine McDade, Human Resources Manager Deborah Hope, IT Director Eric Ryan, IT Business Administrator Vicki Edwards, Telecommunications Systems Administrator Aaron Bourquin, Neighborhood Development Services Director Frank Miles, Administrative Manager Katrina Romano, Parks and Recreation Director Sandy Pfundheller, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Tricia Wisner, Police Chief Todd Garrison, Deputy Police Chief Chris Morales, Public Works Director Julie Bellia, Assistant Public Works Director Monica Bramble, Fleet Manager Kenneth Rappuhn, and Solid Waste Manager Frank Lama.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Carusone.

Ms. Slayton provided a brief introduction relative to the virtual meeting.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Taylor read the following public comment:
Greg Culy: non-ad valorem rates and tax increases.

2. GENERAL BUSINESS:

[20-2268](#)

2021 City Manager's Recommended Budget

Mr. Lear introduced the meeting agenda providing a general budget overview including preliminary tax values.

GENERAL FUND OVERVIEW.

Ms. Ferrell provided an overview including a schedule of proposed changes.

BUILDING FEES

Mr. Lear spoke to the upcoming ordinance for the proposed reduction in building fees.

Mr. Miles presented an overview of changes including structural inspections, electrical inspections, plumbing and gas fees, mechanical fees, alteration and repair fees, start/stop work orders, and miscellaneous fees.

Ms. Romano spoke to justification for keeping administration fees and online permitting adjustments.

There was a consensus to create a policy reflected in the fee schedule, allowing for refunds minus the actual cost with no minimum amount.

Ms. Romano spoke to a legal request performed regarding procedures for reclassifying or changing fees.

Ms. Slayton clarified Commission rights to reduce fees but cannot increase again without a study.

Discussion ensued regarding previous discussions pertaining to adjusting fees equally for all businesses, adjusting fees during this budget cycle, and the abilities and rights of doing business in North Port.

Ms. Slayton clarified the process of business fee classifications, equity study commission, classification and rate study review, raising and lowering fees categorically, and limitations of fee changes.

Mr. Lear addressed budget impacts of reducing business fees.

Discussion continued regarding a fairness issue of fees.

Discussion continued pertaining to directing the Community Economic Development Advisory Board (CEDAB) to review parameters for an Equity Study Commission, report findings to the Commission and if needed, adjust the fee schedule mid-year through a budget amendment.

There was a consensus to create a resolution establishing an Equity Study Commission through the Community Economic Development Advisory Board (CEDAB), giving the new board three months to review the business tax with the criteria set forth by the law; The City may reclassify businesses, professions and occupations and may establish new rate structures with two conditions: Before adopting the ordinance, the city must establish an Equity Study Commission and appoint its members. Each member of the Study Commission must be a representative of the business community within the city's jurisdiction. The Equity Study Commission shall recommend a classification system and rate structure for

business taxes for the city. After consideration by the city, a majority vote is needed to adopt the new business tax ordinance.

Mr. Miles spoke to inspection requirements for water heaters.

Discussion ensued regarding adherence to regulations, and building code requiring hard-wiring of water heaters.

Chief Tutus spoke to safety issues with replacing a water heater.

Mr. Miles addressed the upcoming Trades Advisory Board ordinance to review building fees, inspections and receiving input from construction industry, outsourcing a fee study analysis for next budget cycle vs. this budget cycle, and enlisting the Trades Advisory Board to help with the fee study analysis.

Mr. Lear spoke to funding a budget item to do the study, completing a study within the budget year, and amending the fee schedule to accommodate the changes.

There was a consensus to have the Neighborhood Development Services Department budget for a fee study to be conducted.

Mr. Miles clarified that apartments and assisted living are classified commercial.

Ms. Romano addressed the certificate of occupancy (CO) rate for a regular business vs. apartments/assisted living facilities, and clarifying language for each type.

Mr. Lear will provide CO classification clarification between the fee schedule and the building code.

Ms. Romano spoke to General Fund fees vs Building Fund Account fees.

FIRE RESCUE

Chief Titus provided a review of the proposed new fees including updated Federal Emergency Management Assistance (FEMA) rates, fire plans and specialty reviews, fire inspections, proposed description change in Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Standby, premium rates for extra duty, and spoke to adding the updated FEMA rate schedule in this budget cycle.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Garrison provided a review of fees for off-duty details including proposed new fees for premium rates for extra duty, special details, spoke to the parameters of the special detail charges, implementation of new program, and spoke to no changes in the number of officers at an event.

Mr. Lear addressed the special detail fees being designed to be an average.

Chief Garrison spoke to North Port's special detail charges being competitive with the area, and premium rates compensate for extra duty holidays.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Ms. Wisner presented the fee changes in the department including recreation and athletic programs, City-organized special events/activities, refund policies, North Port Aquatic Center fees, facility rental fees, facility rental refund policy, and clarified refund process being reduced to a percentage, waiting lists for City-sponsored camps, cost recovery associated with cancellations, availability of online rentals, verification of deposits, automatic refunds upon completion of rental barring issues or damage, preparation fees

for rentals or events modified based on need, non-profit free booths for information distribution, clarification for sale of merchandise, and non-profit "donations".

Ms. Pfundheller clarified voluntary donations cannot be required in order to receive "free" merchandise.

Ms. Wisner spoke to refunds at aquatic center, pool rental outside operational hours, and adding the per hour fee for pool rentals.

SOLID WASTE DISTRICT FEES

Mr. Lama provided an overview of the budget including proposed new fees for special waste, garbage monthly fees for dumpster rentals, delinquency and commercial processing fees; proposed fee changes for solid waste initial fees for new customers, change in container sizes, pull-out and open gate fee changes, and commercial bulk fees.

Ms. Bellia spoke to private donation policy for bulk pickups.

Mr. Lama addressed first time downsizing totes for free.

Ms. Bellia clarified verbiage in the ordinance regarding swapping totes, and adding language defining a time frame per year.

Mr. Lama spoke to tipping fees being corrected for commercial pickups.

Ms. Bramble clarified tipping fees increased due to increased volume being picked up.

ROAD AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT FEES

Ms. Bramble provided an overview including proposed new fees for property rentals and security deposits, and rental fee refund policy.

Ms. Bellia clarified staff maintenance for property after rental usage/damages.

Ms. Bramble spoke to special event application or special event permit needed, reduced price for non-profit agencies, Achieve Anything membership being Parks and Recreation specific, sliding fee for barricade set up, City responsibility for barricades vs. vendor/renter responsibility, traffic maintenance responsibilities for events, right-of-way use permit under the Road and Drainage District Fee, and clarification regarding right-of-way fees will be provided.

GENERAL FUND OVERVIEW CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET

Mr. Lear provided a review including millage rate and ad valorem collections, major general revenue funds, ten-year taxable value history, key revenues in General Fund, fund balance policy of 25% for emergencies, 5-10% for rate stabilization items, the range not replenished in this budget, five-year change in Fund Balance, and spoke to verbiage change regarding 5-10% range to "up to 10%".

There was a consensus to change the wording of the Stabilization Fund, instead of being a spread of "5% to 10%", to read "up to 10%."

Discussion continued regarding total revenues, total expenditures, PowerPoint to be forwarded to the Commission, City-wide staffing from General Fund and non-General Fund, comparisons of millage rates with local municipalities, effective millage rate of comparable cities, total budget per capita of comparable cities, per square mile of comparable cities, capital funds of comparable cities, and General Fund overview pie

charts, Road and Drainage Fund overview pie charts, Fire Rescue District overview pie charts, Solid Waste District pie charts, Building Fund pie charts and budget proposals, Utilities Fund overview pie charts, Fleet overview pie charts, the CIP overview pie chart and proposals, and CIP Surtax proposal pie chart.

Ms. Ferrell spoke to the roll-back rate details being received in July and will be forwarded to the Commission

Recess was taken from 11:07 a.m. to 11:21 a.m.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Ms. McDade provided an overview including a budget analysis, organizational chart, priorities for 2020-2021, a policies and procedures manual, electronic record keeping, benefits and wellness, self-funded risk and health insurance, employee engagement/recognition, and safety program, enhancing services including recruitment, onboarding practices, policies and procedures, employee training, employee recognition, risk management/safety, compensation and benefits, wellness programs and staff development, and budget proposals for human resources and risk.

Discussion ensued regarding updating the personnel policy and sending the updated compensation amount to the Commissioners, and providing new employees updated information (onboarding).

Ms. Hope addressed the Laserfiche item for one-time cost for administrative licenses.

Ms. Edwards spoke to the Laserfiche Budget Proposal being combined with IT and budgets will be adjusted.

Ms. Knowles spoke to insurance coverage disparity under general liability increase, and vehicle request.

Ms. Ferrell explained a summary handout for budget proposals.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Ms. Ferrell provided an overview including a slight increase in salaries and health insurance, a workflow chart, and making procurement workflow electronic.

Mr. Lear spoke to needing fuel for travel.

Ms. Ferrell addressed a need for portable monitors for emergency events, and reasoning for creating a budget proposal sheet.

CITY ATTORNEY

Ms. Slayton provided an overview of the proposed budget included office composition, in-house training, in-house real estate services, in-house employment/personnel matters, templates use for staff, procured cloud-based management systems, and developed standard something, accomplishments of a new assistant City attorney, emergency services, in-house litigation, initiatives, department work load graph, work demand graph, budget proposals of education assistant funds, and addition of a second paralegal.

Ms. Herrmann explained the process of estimating salaries in the out-years and sources from which numbers are derived.

Ms. Ferrell provided further clarified pertaining to the handout.

Ms. Slayton spoke to a full year's salary including benefits, office material, and licenses.

Discussion ensued regarding the need for accurate calculation for out-year salaries, and the original vision of the legal department personnel.

Recess was held from 12:17 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

CITY MANAGER

Mr. Lear provided an overview including a request for a real estate consultant for next fiscal year, and spoke to the \$15,000 being for the entire year and will be recurring until there is no further need.

CITY CLERK

Ms. Taylor provided an overview including staff organizational chart, accomplishments, reorganized staff position and duties, implementing GovQA, policy and procedure for public records requests, budget proposals included elections costs, security badge reader, bank and transaction fees for GovQA, annual fees for GovQA, records management training, educational assistance, increase in records storage, Municode, public records request projected revenue, a 23% decrease in operational expenses, spoke to one employee retiring in December, transitioning overflow to other positions, and elections costs.

Ms. Slayton spoke to an ordinance that will be a referendum question coming to the Commission regarding an economic development ad valorem tax exemption.

Ms. Reed explained the election costs being based on number of registered voters, and estimated costs provided by the Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections.

Mr. Lear clarified that election funds are not expended until the election in November.

CITY COMMISSION

Mr. Lear spoke to the challenge coins in 2020-21 budget year and coins already in this budget.

Ms. Taylor spoke to moving funds for promotion items from the City Clerk to the Commission, and increasing Florida League of Cities travel costs.

There was a consensus to remove the \$5,000 membership budgeted for the Florida League of Mayors membership.

Discussion ensued regarding the National League of Cities, and the Intern Travel/Training budget.

A consensus was requested but not achieved to remove \$1100 for intern training and travel.

POLICE

Chief Garrison presented an overview including 2020 department accomplishments, fiscal year 2021 budget, new positions, computer-generated dispatch program ProPhoenix and Records Management System, new positions, a budget analysis, impact fee fund, police education fund, forfeiture fund, budget proposals, explanation of increases, general budget overview increases, and a budget overview pie chart.

Discussion ensued regarding refunding the part-time computer forensic examiner.

Chief Garrison spoke to taxes going to Sarasota County covering core components.

There was a consensus to have the part-time forensic examiner added back in the budget and review again in July.

Discussion continued regarding a more complete picture of the budget in July.

Chief Garrison spoke to the reclassification of the volunteer support specialist, actual costs for police coverage during a baseball game, reimbursable costs for police coverage at the stadium, addition to rentals and leases regarding the Benderson property on Toledo Blade and I-75, confirmed the number of officers under a sergeant and commander, and other volunteer funding options or grants to offset the department budget.

Mr. Lear spoke to authorizing but not funding the forensic examiner position.

Deputy Chief Morales addressed assessing the part-time position workload.

Mr. Lear clarified revenue accounting transaction practices.

Chief Garrison spoke to supplemental pay for specialty details, and a feasibility report regarding expanding the police department.

Mr. Lear spoke to the informational needs for a renting space for building prior to Commission discussion.

Discussion continued pertaining to searching for a location if the Benderson developers decide not to build, options to resolve the lack of police department space, accreditation standards for a building, additional requested vehicles found in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), school crossing guards not paid during March and April, and the 4-11 tip application charged every other year.

Mr. Rappuhn spoke to data that determines vehicle needs, deriving fuel costs, and work charged when completed.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Ryan presented an overview including an organizational chart, proposed budget highlights regarding increased governance and project management, support City staff, improving infrastructure and connectivity, security software, and spoke to details that increased costs for audio/visual service/assistance, and outside contracted for services.

Mr. Lear addressed policies needed in security areas, providing a cost analysis next year of the contracted services and how it paid off.

Mr. Ryan spoke to the proposed licensing also covering the City Manager and two Assistant City Managers, and expanding to other departments.

Ms. Edwards spoke to spreading costs over several years on projects and services.

Mr. Ryan addressed examining redundancy in department platforms, renewing contract for the telephone system, and internal phone switches in the closet connecting everything, and phone system greater efficiency to forward main lines to homes.

Mr. Bourquin explained phone support covers hardware and virtual licenses providing a greater internet bandwidth, and replacement of servers and upgrades for the GIS information.

Recess was held from 3:04 p.m. to 3:21 p.m.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Titus presented an overview including a mission statement, accomplishments, staffing goals, operation and capital plans, budget proposals for personnel/operations/CIP, impact fees, renewals/replacements, Emergency Medical Services budget, Fire Rescue District budget, recommended assessment tiers, total expenditure budget, and ISO Class 1 rating achievement.

Mr. Lear spoke to investment income earned on their revenue.

Chief Titus addressed recommendations of a sustainable return for vehicles, assessment projection of 5% per year moving forward, grant applications currently in process, funding for fire station 81, funding for apparatus/equipment, future CIP planning, impact fee revenue, mentioned receiving \$62,000 from CARES Act as a reimbursement for loss of revenue due to COVID.

Mr. Lear spoke to impact fee discussion scheduled on an upcoming Commission agenda.

Mr. Slayton spoke to a 90-day notice required to increase enhanced impact fees and clarified the increase must be based on the old study.

There was a consensus direct the City Manager to bring back an ordinance or resolution to raise impact fees to 100% of the 2011 study.

Chief Titus spoke to needing research regarding cost recovery for large animal rescues.

Mr. Herlihy explained equipment costs for large animal rescue.

Chief Titus spoke to mutual aid agreements with Sarasota County, Charlotte County, DeSoto County and potential other areas, focusing on life/safety of people, and using volunteers for animal rescue.

There was a consensus to remove large animal rescue budget item.

Chief Titus addressed the recommended two RFID Scanners and future replacements as needed, the PEMT MCO being a Medicaid program for transport, stretcher service agreement, FEMA-sponsored emergency management courses, a comprehensive hazard analysis plan, pallets of water secured for the City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and residents, meals ready to eat (MRE) meals for emergencies, base budget components, explained workforce management licenses, training facility revenue and expenditures clarified, progress of the training tower provided with anticipated move-in date, Station 81 renovations a combined asset between Fire Rescue District and EMS, and six recruit positions not anticipated to be spent next year.

Vice Mayor Luke left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Lear provided additional information regarding impact fee meetings.

Chief Titus spoke regarding Code Red being utilized currently.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Taylor read the following public comment:

David Duval: reduction of reduction of building fees, overall increase in taxes.

Greg Cully: questions regarding the City Manager's budget and double digit increases.

4. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor McDowell adjourned the meeting at 4:59 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Debbie McDowell, Mayor

Attest: _____
Heather Taylor, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the Commission Regular Meeting this ____ day of _____, 2020.