



TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP

MINUTES - JUNE 16, 2015

The Town Council Workshop convened at 2:00 P.M. Those present were: Mayor Lawrence, Vice Mayor Soranno, Councilor Schear and Councilor Smith.

Absent: Councilor Petruccelli

Also Present: Captain Rawson; Walter Pierce, Director of Finance; Elaine Jackson, Town Clerk; Bonnie Dhonau, Town Administrator; Anne Miller and Laura Garrison.

ITEM # AGENDA ITEM

1.0 Discussion relative to agreement with Garrison Market Management for conducting an open air Sunday Morning Market and its continuation next season.

Bonnie Dhonau, Town Administrator, reported the market started for the first time in December 2014 and they tried December through May. However, after meeting with Laura Garrison of Garrison Market Management this week to review the contract, it was determined that conducting the market from October through April would work best, due to the decline in attendance and the increase in beach goers in May. Ms. Garrison requested the hours of 9 am to 1 pm remain the same to accommodate the Salt Rock Grill parking situation. The \$1,000 security deposit would be rolled over rather than refunded. Their attorney requested signing a statement that we will not solicit her vendors. Vendors were concerned their personal information would be made a public record. The renewal agreement will have these minor changes.

Mayor Lawrence stated he had concerns that many Town manpower hours would be expended in support of the market, however, according to Chief Hughes, only one police officer spends one hour a day and there is no need for Public Services to cleanup. He reported he is getting a lot of good reports. The only negative comments came from the Salt Rock Grill employees about the parking situation in February and March. For this reason, vendors should be required to park in other places.

James J. Lawrence
Mayor

Patrick C. Soranno
Vice Mayor

Michael "Mike" Petruccelli
Councilor

Diantha Schear
Councilor

William F. Smith
Councilor

Bonnie Dhonau
Town Administrator

Terry E. Hughes
Chief of Police

Walter H. Pierce, III
Director of Finance
and Personnel

Elaine N. Jackson, MMC
Town Clerk

Robert J. Metz, Jr.
Town Attorney

Malcolm Green
Building Official

Ms. Laura Garrison stated they want to make this a low impact, positive experience and views this as a community endeavor. She is looking into using Mahuffer's parking as a possible parking spot and vendors can car-pool.

Ms. Dhonau commented she would like to see the Youth Advisory Council get involved, perhaps with a library book sale. Also, the Gulf Blvd. Beautification and Arts Council projects could promote their project from a table at the market.

Ms. Garrison stated she has already been in touch with Alice Lawrence, Library President, and a meeting has been scheduled to brainstorm a library book sale, with the help of YAC.

Ms. Dhonau reported Attorney Metz will bring the modified agreement to Council in July.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with the agreement, as modified.

2.0 Discussion relative to establishing a policy regarding elected officials' travel expenses and amending FY 2014/2015, if necessary, to reflect anticipated additional expenses.

Mayor Lawrence stated this issue came up due to Councilor Petruccelli being appointed to a committee position with the Florida League of Cities, which will necessitate him traveling to Orlando on three occasions in the next three months. About \$10,000 is budgeted each year for travel expenses for Council members and additional expenses of this nature are not covered.

Mayor Lawrence asked for comments relative to how to handle the additional expenses.

Council members discussed the matter, and it was suggested that each Council member be given a designated amount to use for the year, and each member may decide how and when it would be spent. It was also suggested that parameters be set in a policy stating which functions the Town supports and if a Council member chooses to go outside the parameters, he will not be reimbursed.

Mayor Lawrence stated he would prefer Council members put the extra time into local organizations, such as PSTA and TDC, with good motives involved for wanting to serve.

Mr. Pierce stated the budget breaks out the Suncoast League of Cities, Florida League of Cities and the Florida Shores and Beach Preservation Association as organizations it supports. Any expenses over and above are not covered. We are recommending for FY 2015/2016 budget that each Council person be allocated \$2,000 per year to be spent on travel. This could be tracked. Another \$2,000 set aside for the Mayor's discretion for allowance of additional travel expenses with Council approval. This type of structure would give the Council flexibility.

Mayor Lawrence stated he liked giving people a choice. Conferences and hotels are getting very expensive and will use up all of this year's funds. However, he stated he felt the Town should cover Councilor Petruccelli's trips, since he had been encouraged to get involved with the FLC.

Mr. Pierce, Director of Finance, stated there does not need to be a policy written for this year; however, after the two upcoming conferences, we will do a budget amendment. Also, car-pooling would help cut down on the expenses traveling to Hawk's Kay.

It was the consensus of the Council to allocate \$2,000 per person for travel expenses with a \$2,000 buffer for good causes for FY 2015/2016.

3.0 Discussion of potential debt service savings.

Mr. Pierce reviewed the details relative to an opportunity to re-fund Series 2005A Bonds for the undergrounding project, stating the Public Resources Advisory Group would be our financial advisor through this transaction.

Mr. Pierce continued: the Town has twenty years remaining on \$4.5 million. Re-funding would save over \$350,000 over twenty years. The Bond Council would create a resolution for us and we would aim for the July 14th Council meeting.

Mr. Pierce also stated we would have to qualify as an A rating and our CAFR would be reviewed. We would use the Florida League of Cities Bond Council as our representative.

Mr. Pierce further stated this is an excellent opportunity. The further we go into the twenty remaining years, the more we pay down the principle. There is no upfront cost, as refinancing is included in the issue of the bonds.

Mayor Lawrence stated if we re-fund, we would have a good debt and save the Town more than \$18,000 per year. The County is paying us \$1.2 million over the next three years and asked Council if we have a responsibility to use the money to pay down the debt.

Mayor Lawrence further stated the only guaranteed money for Gulf Boulevard Beautification Capital Improvement is for approved projects. We don't get it unless we spend it first.

Council members discussed the unassigned fund balance and how to determine what percentage is appropriate for reserves in the event of a catastrophic event. It was noted that Florida League of Cities has consultants on retainer who could help us determine what is necessary, and if the 30% policy needs to be updated.

Ms. Dhonau reminded Council we are qualified for \$1.9 million, but we need to spend the money for the Gulf Blvd. Beautification and Arts Council initiatives first in order to get reimbursed.

Mr. Pierce explained the money for Capital Improvement comes from the General Fund. It's a five-year paper budget. He also explained there is no CIP bank account. Council must determine the Town's needs and designate funds needed for the beautification projects. This must be added into the unassigned Fund Balance. We are receiving money, but also paying it out in debt.

5.0 Update from the Finance Director relative to the status of the FY 2015/2016 budget.

Mr. Pierce handed out a draft of the General Fund Expenses Planning Document for FY 2015/2016, and briefly reviewed the following Department Expenditures:

Legislative: There is a minor raise in salaries, and reflects \$2,000 for each Council member plus \$2,000 buffer for travel expenses. The St. Patrick's Day expenses are now in the Administrative account.

Administrative: Personal services has increased due to eliminating the Deputy Clerk position and extending the hours of the Receptionist. Professional Support includes IT support, equipment and supplies, web site design and Bob Brotherton Engineering Consultant. PD Police Reserved Training is an additional \$5,000, which will allow for flexibility. Legislation dictates that funds received from traffic citations be used for Police Education, however it is not enough to keep up with training required for the troops.

Finance: Audit Services will increase by \$2,100 due to GASB requirements. Contractual services are increasing. Auditors recommended additional training, thus more money will be put into Travel/Per Diem. Bank charges are down due to eliminating \$350 per month bank service charges. Tyler Technologies is increasing to \$7,000 to maintain software and the fee to be in the Cloud. Insurance increased to \$82,000 due to Windstorm insurance increase and \$15,000 in anticipation of Worker Compensation increase.

Building Maintenance: Includes \$47,080 for contracts, including one full time person and one part time person through Labor Finders. \$57,000 reflects maintenance contracts such as elevator, key card access, air conditioning, etc.

Parking Fund: No changes

Police Department: The Police Budget has already been approved, however, when we created it we did not budget for increased health insurance, dental insurance or worker compensation claims. This budget will need some help and warrant additional funds. Insurance shows coverage for police cars.

Building Department: Since the last budget, Mr. Green is now full-time. Mr. Brotherton's pay is split between the Building Department and Administrative. Additional money has been added for training and education.

Library: Same except for increased membership.

Public Services: Groundskeeper position eliminated in Personal Services, which helps pay for contract labor. Beach maintenance remains at \$11,000 for this year and next, in the event of red tide. This can be reduced or eliminated. \$8,000 is in equipment reserve, as we try to set aside funds every year to purchase bigger equipment.

Interfund Transfer: The Utility Tax transfer is designated for Capital Improvement and Debt Service.

Departmental Summary: Right now, estimated budget for 2015/2016 is \$2,931,218., and is \$80,574 over the amended budget for FY 2014/2015. The amendments to the FY 2014/2015 are reflected. Our estimated Ad Valorem with the same millage rate is \$1,344,964, which is an increase of \$87,735. There might be a reduction in the Communication Services Tax. Health Insurance total will be received after June 19th, but we are projecting a 7% increase.

Mr. Pierce stated there will be additional tweaks. We have other revenue sources for Capital Improvement, but there will be more of a burden on the General Fund when Penny for Pinellas ends as we get closer to 2020. Revenues and Capital Improvement will be presented at the Workshop on July 14, 2015.

The Town Council Workshop adjourned at 3:55 P.M.



ELAINE JACKSON, MMC
Town Clerk