

**FRUITLAND PARK CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP  
MEETING MINUTES  
August 6, 2018**

A workshop meeting of the Fruitland Park City Commission was held at 506 W. Berckman Street, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731 on Monday, August 6, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Mayor Chris Cheshire, Vice Mayor John L. Gunter, Jr., Commissioners Christopher Bell, Ray Lewis, and Rick Ranize.

**Also Present:** District 2 Commissioner Candidate Fred Collins; City Manager Gary La Venia; City Treasurer Jeannine Racine; Police Chief Michael Fewless and Captain Erik Luce, Police Department; Interim Fire Chief Donald Gilpin, Deputy Fire Chief Tim Yoder, and Firefighter Brandon Clutter, Fire Department; Fruitland Park Library Director JoAnn Glendinning; Public Works Director Dale Bogle; Community Development Director Tracy Kelley, and City Clerk Esther B. Coulson

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Cheshire called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Chief Fewless.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Cheshire requested that Ms. Coulson call the roll.

**By unanimous consent and upon Mayor Cheshire's suggestion, the city commission fixed this evening's city commission workshop at 9:00 p.m. as the time to which to adjourn.**

**3. MILLAGE - BUDGET SUMMARY**

Mr. La Venia explained that the city commission has been presented with a 3.9863 millage rate -- the same as the last two years -- and recognized the tremendous work that has been expended into the FY 2018-19 budget.

**4. CAPITAL PURCHASES BY FUND**

Later in the meeting, Ms. Racine reviewed the summaries of funds for capital outlay which includes the history by departments for the last four years.

**5. GENERAL FUND OVERVIEW OF EXPENSES**

Ms. Racine explained that the FY 2018-19 budget is the same as the last two years -- 1.8 percent over the roll back rate of 3.1934 bringing an additional \$721,000 in ad valorem -- and noted the total budget to be \$10,929,157.

Ms. Racine gave an overview of the power-point presentation regarding the FY 2018-19 budget with the six-year trend on the city's adopted budgets and explained the reduction in the budget was to meet additional costs.

- graphs showing general fund revenues and expenditures by category;
- a pie-chart showing the FY 2018-19 adopted departments' budget; expenses;
- graphs reflecting departmental personnel and operating expenses and capital outlay and noted the percentage of the city's budget, and
- a chart showing grants and contingency, transfers and reserves.

## 6. GENERAL FUND DEPARTMENTS

### - **Library Department**

After Ms. Racine's presentation and following much discussion, the city commission had no changes to the library department's budget.

### - **(Law Enforcement) Police Department**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the police department budget.

In response to Vice Mayor Gunter's question, Mr. La Venia speculated the cost for the new public safety building to be \$2.5 million depending on the design and noted if a design is planned to be similar to Sumter County's new public safety building, the cost would be more.

Mr. La Venia suggested that the city commission consider, when it reaches the point in the future to construct the public safety building, reviewing a different method of approach to assign someone else to design, build and complete the building in one process.

Following extensive discussions, Ms. Racine anticipated 19 law enforcement officers at the end of FY 2017-18 and 21 officers at the end of FY 2018-19 and noted that one would be dedicated as a school resource officer (SRO) to which Mr. La Venia interjected that the city would be allocating the anticipated \$40,000 earmarked for the SRO to retain another officer sometime during the year; thus, the reason for increasing said number from 19 to 21.

Commissioner Lewis addressed the purpose of avoiding a deficit to fulfill an obligation that did not belong to the city and indicated that due to the funding not being present to fund the position for a whole year, the city would fund same midyear FY 2018-19 to which Mr. La Venia and Ms. Racine concurred.

Commissioner Lewis and Mr. La Venia, in agreement with Vice Mayor Gunter's reference to the public safety impact fees, indicated that it could be subsidized with other capital funding to which Mayor Cheshire interjected that same ought to be earmarked for the new public building for growth.

Following extensive discussions, the city commission had no changes to the police department budget.

### - **Fire Department**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the fire department budget.

Extensive deliberations ensued on the fire department sustainability, the fire assessment fee to the city supplementing the volunteer fire department (serving the older city), and the city's potential growth.

After Mr. La Venia acknowledged the number of Village Public Safety Departments within The Villages Community Development District where its fire rescue serves its increasing population.

After discussions were held on the payment to The Villages and the fire assessment fee to staff the fire department which does not cover operational costs in advance, Mayor Cheshire addressed the challenges in growing the general fund; anticipated the potential growth with the likelihood of the fire assessment fee remaining the same (without utilizing the budget) and believed it would be useful for the city to seek partnership. He noted the need to address said issue.

After discussion, the city commission had no changes to the fire department budget.

- **Building and Zoning Department**

Ms. Racine reviewed the building and zoning department budget.

After discussion, the city commission had no changes to the building and zoning department.

- **Recreation Department**

o **Pool**

Ms. Racine reviewed the Gardenia Park Swimming Pool budget.

Commissioner Lewis questioned the increase in costs and whether it was because of the chemicals to retain the swimming pool's usage for a longer period of time due to the Titans Swim Team.

In response, Ms. Yoder explained that the \$7,500 increase in chemical costs was based upon whether the parks and recreation department could acquire the pool heater. She relayed her conversations with Mr. La Venia, earlier this day, where the City of Leesburg is rejecting the pool heater as it cannot be relocated to H O Dabney Swimming Pool and relayed the city's request for the City of Fruitland Park to make them an offer to purchase same.

Ms. Yoder referred to her recent meeting with the pool owner to offer \$500; noted the total cost of \$2,000 which would include the \$500 and stated that it be transferred into operational costs.

After Mr. La Venia mentioned the potential installation of the natural gas heater to include connecting the line into Gardenia Park Swimming Pool, Mr. Bogle pointed out his previous conversations with Leesburg Electric who identified the gas line from the roadway to the swimming pool.

Answering a question posed by Vice Mayor Gunter, Ms. Yoder explained that she does not know the cost of the 15-year old pool heater rejected by the City of Leesburg; indicated that it is more than adequate and should require a lot less usage at Gardenia Park Swimming Pool, and explained that the heater was examined earlier this day where it was revealed that it was in good condition. She explained that the other pool heaters she recently inspected were smaller.

Mayor Cheshire indicated that if the pool heater is acquired, any increased costs would be transferred to the swim team.

In response to Vice Mayor Gunter's inquiry, Ms. Yoder explained that the swim team has a \$1,000 cashier's check for the heater which she has in her possession.

Ms. Yoder responded to an inquiry posed by Commissioner Bell that the Leesburg Aquatics Club Inc.'s agreement with the City of Leesburg indicated that they paid for half the heater costs and there would be no fees to the city; however, the City of Fruitland Park agreement with the club agreed to a set amount per month in order to utilize the pool heater for swim lessons.

After discussion, Commissioner Bell recalled the city commission's discussions at its April 27 and December 14, 2017 regular meetings on the purchase of swimming pool heaters and the ability to keep Gardenia Park's Swimming Pool open year-round.

In response, Commissioner Ranize suggested earmarking same into the budget in the future when the city has money.

Ms. Yoder answered Commissioner Bell's request that the pool heater was initially requested as the departmental request; however, it is not included in the FY 2018-19 budget.

The city commission had no changes to the pool's budget.

- **Recreation**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the recreation budget.

Commissioner Lewis recalled Waste Management Inc. of Florida owing the city \$10,000 for the proposed recreation center (the current Fruitland Park Library) to which Mr. La Venia explained that said amount would be an offset and will be in addition to the budget.

Commissioner Lewis stated that he did not see that the future remodeling of the current Fruitland Park Library was included in the FY 2018-19 budget; recognized Commissioner Ranize' previous support on the need for an emergency power generator and addressed his awareness of the emergency activities that took place

during Hurricane Irma at city hall where he believed that holding something similar same in the recreation building might be better.

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Mr. La Venia explained that staff submitted the hazard mitigation grant program application for the portable grant generator earlier this day where the cost is expected to be \$19,000 which needs to be identified.

In answer to Commissioner Lewis' inquiry, Mr. La Venia addressed the need to obtain numbers for the total installation to place the generator during renovations.

After discussion, Commissioner Ranize noted the potential lack of communication and emergency service to the public at city hall (in the event of an emergency), if it does not have power and Commissioner Lewis addressed the need for an emergency generator at city hall to which Vice Mayor Gunter concurred.

Vice Mayor Gunter pointed out the session he participated in at the 2017 Florida League of Cities 91<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference where it was stressed, during one of the sessions, that city halls need electricity which will impact the city's operations and inquired whether the installation of a generator would assist city hall.

Mr. La Venia, in agreement, indicated that the fire department could be connected with partial power which is part of the grant process. He responded to Commissioner Lewis' inquiry that superseding the relocation of the emergency generator power with the remodeling of the current library is a decision to be made.

After much discussion, the city commission had no changes to the recreation budget.

- **Public Works Department**

o **Roads and Streets**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the roads and streets budget, Commissioner Ranize referred to road and street facilities; personal services; pointed out the city commission's previous review of the FY 2017-18 budget and recalled previous discussions that if two positions were provided to the public works department, the median on US Highway 27/441 would be maintained. He suggested taking one of the positions back as the other was removed.

Commissioner Ranize pointed out the creation of a new part time administrative assistant position which has already been funded; questioned the reason why he was not made aware of same and suggested its removal where he believed that the funds could be allocated towards for the SRO where there is a shortfall law enforcement as requested by Chief Fewless.

After much discussion, Mayor Cheshire polled and recognized the city commission's position to leave the personal services for road and street facilities as they are in the FY 2018-19 budget.

- **Parks and Recreation (Maintenance)**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the parks and recreation (maintenance) budget, the city commission had no changes.

- **Solid Waste**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the solid waste budget, and in response to Commissioner Ranize concerns on the complaints he received regarding the automatic pickup service (claw truck), he requested that Mr. La Venia investigate the issue.

In response to Vice Mayor Gunter's inquiry on Waste Management Inc's recent schedule and solid waste collection services and after Commissioner Lewis' voiced concerns on his request to collect refuse next to his garbage cart, Mr. La Venia explained that he will call Waste Management in that regard.

Commissioner Lewis referred to Vice Mayor Gunter's previous comments, addressed earlier under the recreation item on this evening's agenda regarding the proposed recreation center and requested that Mr. La Venia write a letter to Messrs. Doug McCoy or Jose Boscan, Waste Management Inc., to secure the \$10,000.

The city commission had no changes to the solid waste budget.

- **Stormwater**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the stormwater budget.

In response to Commissioner Ranize' statements on the need to conduct a rate study to increase the stormwater, Commissioner Lewis referred to its inclusion in the FY 2018-19 budget.

Mr. La Venia addressed reasons to conduct a utility rate study on water and water wastewater and suggested including the stormwater impact fee.

After further discussion, Ms. Racine concurred with Commissioner Lewis' suggestion on the need to conduct a rate study which ought to be considered at the next city commission meeting.

The city commission had no changes to the stormwater budget.

- **Administration**

- **Legislative**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the legislative budget, the city commission had no changes.

- **Executive**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the executive budget, the city commission had no changes.

- **Finance**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the finance budget, the city commission had no changes.

- **Legal**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the legal budget.

Following some discussion and after Commissioner Ranize referred to the two outstanding cases, Ms. Racine suggested leaving the \$15,000 in contingency and remove same as needed.

After further discussion, the city commission had no changes to legal's budget.

- **Other Governmental Services**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on other governmental services' budget and reported the first increase in the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) base value which was not included in the budget.

In response to Commissioner Bell's inquiry, Ms. Racine explained that she will provide the city commission with comparisons on the value for FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19.

The city commission had no changes to other governmental services budget.

- **Interfund**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the interfund and noted that this was the first time reserves were added to the fund balance.

The city commission had no changes to the interfund budget.

- **Utility**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the utility budget.

Following some discussion and after Commissioner Lewis' calculation on the utilities' deficit, Ms. Racine described the increases in water wastewater and operating costs; recalled the city's two-year interest-only loan of \$2.5 million during FY 2017-18 and described the payments involved.

After Vice Mayor Gunter pointed out the sewer utility services, "removed demolish water wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) moved to the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for \$200,000", Ms. Racine explained how said item was transferred to and removed from CIP is no longer available to which Messrs. La Venia and Bogle identified \$42,000 to eliminate, haul and shut down the WWTP. Mr. Bogle described the process, if the system was bypassed and indicated that approximately three years of

life would remain; if it is safely secured and addressed the possibility to perform same in-house.

After Commissioner Ranize outlined the amount borrowed on the WWTP and following further discussion, Commissioner Ranize requested information on the total cost of overage be presented for the next city commission meeting.

Following further discussion, Mayor Cheshire recalled his complaints regarding water and water wastewater every year in the budget recognizing the reason for conducting a utility rate study as it was never profitable to which Commissioner Lewis calculated the approximately \$900,000 deficit.

Subsequent to further discussion, Commissioner Ranize addressed the need for more users to connect to the WWTP and suggested that the city's existing policy be changed. He felt that the city, in the future, cannot afford to transmit to the Town of Lady Lake and suggested reconsidering the planning and construction of another WWTP.

After discussion, the city commission had no changes to the utility budget.

- **Water**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the water budget, the city commission had no changes.

- **Sewer**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the sewer budget.

After discussion, the city commission had no changes to the sewer budget.

- **CRA**

Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the CRA budget.

In response to Commissioner Lewis' inquiry on utilizing CRA funds towards the remodeling of the existing Fruitland Park library building and transforming it as the city's community recreation building, Ms. Racine explained that same ought to be deferred to City Attorney Anita Geraci- Carver where it would need to be included in the CRA's Redevelopment Plan; the building would need to be within the CRA boundary and there ought to be a narrative of descriptions of items to be used if it is planned, if that is the opinion of Ms. Geraci-Carver.

Mr. La Venia explained that if Ms. Geraci-Carver does not have a problem, the city can implement same to which Ms. Racine concurred and believed that there is approximately \$157,000 in contingency and about \$357,000 in CRA.

After much discussion, the city commission had no changes to the CRA budget.

- **CIP Fund**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the CIP fund and following much discussion, the city commission had no changes.

- **Recreation Fund**

After Ms. Racine gave a presentation on the recreation fund, the city commission had no changes to the recreation budget.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS**

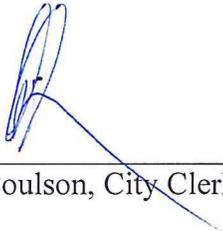
After Commissioner Lewis envisioned the outcome of what he believes would result in the future millage rate; addressed the need for potential budget cuts to allow for future growth and gave his opinion that he previously shared with Mr. La Venia in this regard, Mayor Cheshire anticipated the future newly appointed commissioners' awareness of being a part of the Fruitland Park as a community.

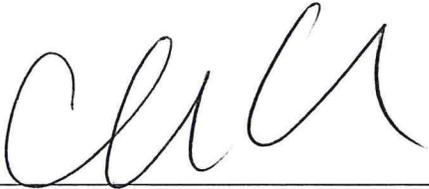
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After Commissioner Ranize expressed concerns on public safety and The Villages of Fruitland Park, Mayor Cheshire probed the city commission's position on increasing the millage rate and closed the debate.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

**The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.**

The minutes were approved at the October 11, 2018 regular meeting.

Signed   
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Esther B. Coulson, City Clerk

Signed   
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Chris Cheshire, Mayor